EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT FAT LOSS

fitness SPECIAL EDITION

fatloss

A COMPLETE FAT LOSS GUIDE

9 SUCCESS STORIES

FAT LOSS SECRETS REVEALED

Take back your body!

EXCLUSIVE!

'HOW I LOST 47 kilos!'



SHE DID IT!

GENEVIEVE REGAINS HER BODY AFTER 2 PREGNANCIES AND 47KG OF WEIGHT GAIN

3 CALORIE BLASTING WORKOUTS

LOSE THE WEIGHT WITHOUT REBOUNDING!

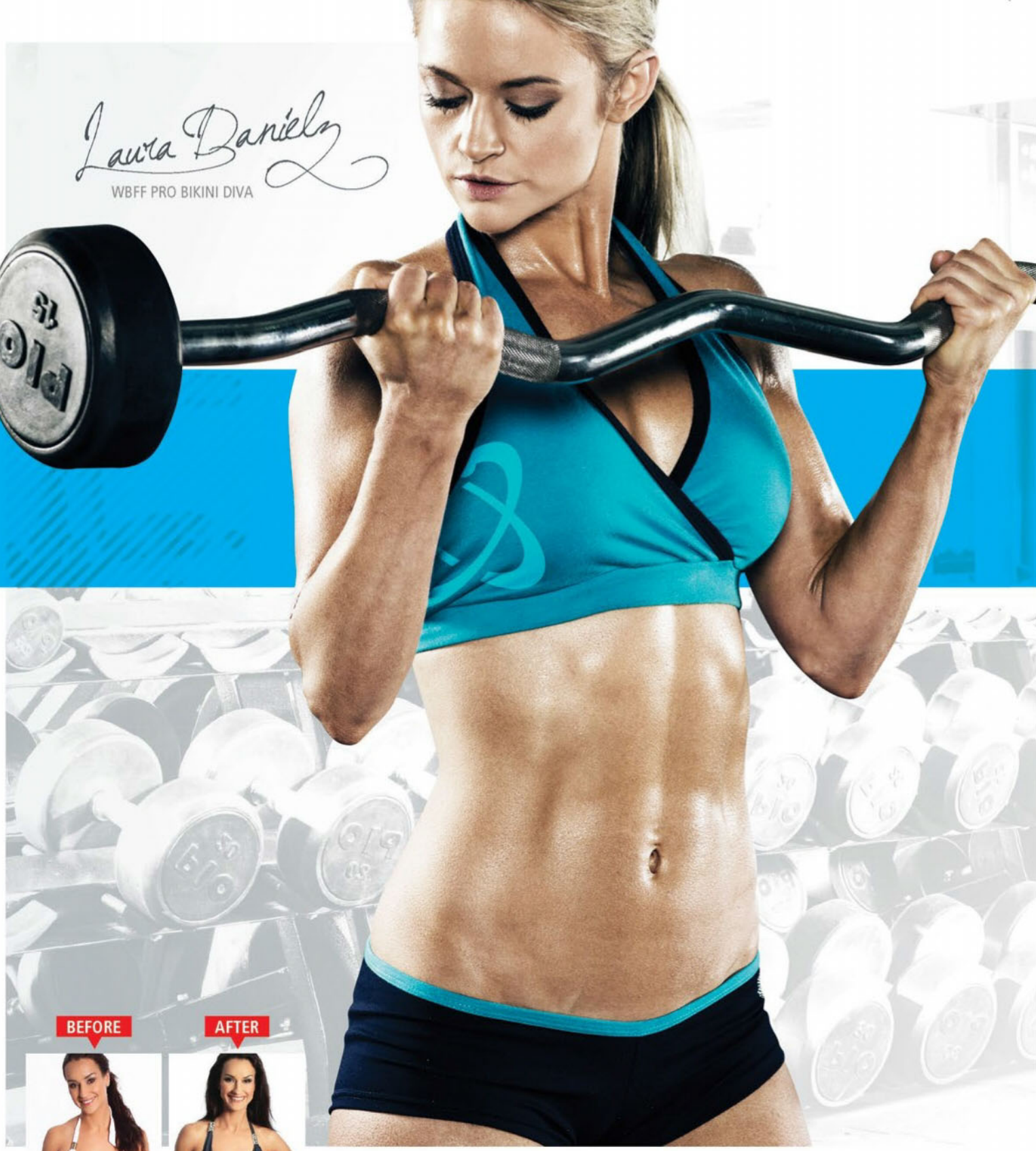
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Laura Daniely

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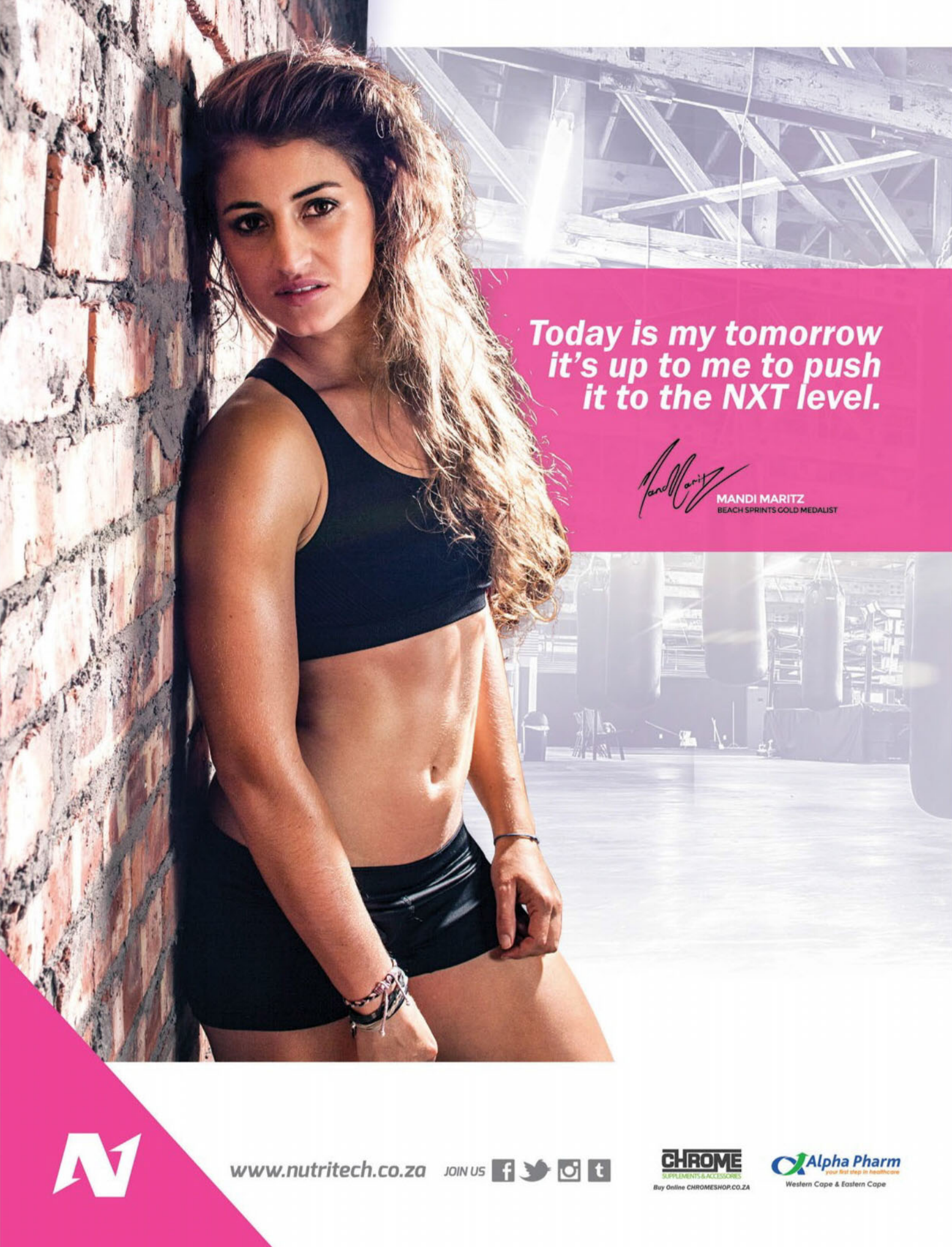
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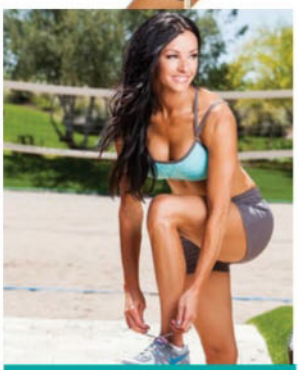
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Genevieve Watling Brand
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Dressed by: *www.boostgymwear.co.za*

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EDITOR'S LETTER



EAT LESS AND MOVE MORE. YOU'VE PROBABLY HEARD THIS STATEMENT A THOUSAND TIMES WHILE MUNCHING ON A CARROT STICK OR SPENDING QUALITY TIME WITH THE TREADMILL. While it's a basic, relative truth, unfortunately losing weight and reducing that unwanted body fat is not that simple.

If it doesn't challenge you, it doesn't change you

That statement tends to oversimplify the fat-loss process as it's not merely about eating less and moving more. You need to have a solid understanding of 'how to eat' or 'what to do' to achieve your goals and make your results sustainable. Without this foundation on which to build on you'll carry on counting calories till the cows come home.

Thankfully, if you're reading this, it means you're looking for those answers. Whether you're battling to overcome pregnancy weight gain, struggling with ineffective yo-yo dieting or have been unsuccessful in dropping lifestyle-related weight gain, shedding those extra kilos of unwanted fat is on the top of every woman's priority list.

We all deserve to feel confident and comfortable in our own skin. And, although it may seem difficult to see it from where you are right now, this can become a reality for you too. All our transformation success stories were once where you are now - frustrated, demotivated and in the dark. However, making the decision to change was the first step to transforming their lives and their bodies into healthier and happier versions of their previous selves.

Hopefully, with this magazine in your hands, this is the point where you're at right now. By buying this magazine you've identified the need for change in your life, and have accepted that only you can make it happen.

Well, rest assured that in ***fitness*** magazine's special ***fatloss*** issue we have everything you need in terms of the 'how' and 'what'. We tackle all the common nutrition and diet-related questions. While I'm not a big supporter of the word 'diet', because healthy living is a lifestyle, we explore the best dieting techniques to help you drop those unwanted kilos, and keep them off, without going to unsustainable extremes.

We also delve deeper into the psychology of fat loss, highlight the most effective forms of exercise to compliment your healthy eating plan to reshape your body, and also share remarkable real-life, achievable transformation stories for a healthy dose of motivation and inspiration.

In this comprehensive fat loss guide you have all the information you need to transform your mind, body and life, and maintain these healthy lifestyle changes.

With that in mind, always remember 'doubt kills more dreams than failure ever will'. You owe it to yourself, your health and your happiness to take the next step, and to make it a lasting change this time round. Go on, take this journey. Become the person you've always wanted to be. We'll be with you every step of the way.

Tanja
fitness magazine editor

MY FAVOURITES



PG 80 THE SEXY GLUTES DIET PLAN: The journey to sexy glutes starts in the kitchen



PG 46 BE INSPIRED: 9 success stories that will change the way you think about fat loss.

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To be used in conjunction with an energy controlled balanced diet and moderate exercise.

BY MELANIE HEYNS, Features writer

4 FAT BURNING FOODS

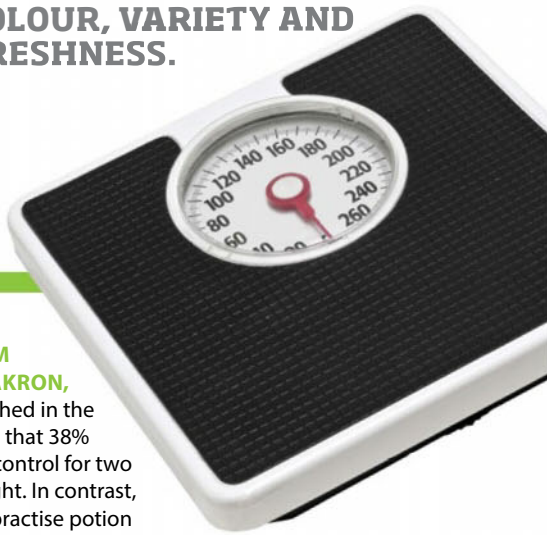
- Nuts
- Fish and other seafood
- Avocado
- Coconut

CUTTING DOWN

People are always surprised when they realise what size a food portion should actually be. Cutting down on portion sizes is an important step when it comes to being healthy. The first cut can be quite a shock, but soon enough you'll get used to eating less. An easy trick when it comes to portion size is to opt for a smaller plate. A small plate full of food looks better than a large plate with only a small amount of food on it. If your plate is looking a bit sparse try filling it with some fruits and vegetables.

AN AVERAGE HEALTHY INTAKE OF GOOD FATS IN THE DIET SHOULD BE APPROXIMATELY 30-40G A DAY. THE FAT CONTENT OF DIETS IN AFFLUENT POPULATIONS CAN BE NEARLY FOUR TIMES THIS AMOUNT.

DON'T JUST COUNT CALORIES OR MEASURE PORTION SIZES WHEN IT COMES TO YOUR DIET. IT IS ALSO IMPORTANT TO THINK IN TERMS OF COLOUR, VARIETY AND FRESHNESS.



A 2004 STUDY OF 329 OVERWEIGHT PATIENTS FROM SUMMA HEALTH SYSTEM IN AKRON, Ohio in the United States, published in the journal, Obesity Research, found that 38% of those who practised portion control for two years lost 5% or more body weight. In contrast, 33% of participants who didn't practise potion control experienced a 5% or more increase in body weight.

WEIGH IT UP

MANY EXPERTS CLAIM YOU SHOULD DO YOUR WEIGHT TRAINING FIRST, BEFORE YOUR CARDIO.



This ensures you have enough energy to lift weights at the highest intensity, and it also depletes your glycogen stores. When you finally hit your cardio session your body will therefore need to tap into fat stores for energy.

DID YOU KNOW?

Weight lifting can boost your resting metabolic rate for 48 to 72 hours, burning more calories than you normally would at rest?

AT **9 calories per gram** FAT IS THE MOST CALORIFIC NUTRIENT WE CAN EAT.



MAINTAINING A HEALTHY BODY WEIGHT PLACES LESS STRAIN ON THE HEART AND REDUCES THE RISK OF HEART ATTACK, HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE AND ANGINA.



"Portion sizes are two to three times bigger than those consumed 2000 years ago." - *Registered dietitian and author, Gabi Steenkamp*

Portion control basics, by registered dietitian and author Gabi Steenkamp:
Half of your plate or half the volume of a meal should consist of colourful whole foods from mother nature.

Add one fat source to every meal. Saturated fat should not be more than 1/3 of your total daily fat intake, but don't avoid it.



WORK YOUR BODY
Total body training should be the basis of any fitness programme, whether your goal is to improve athletic ability, lose weight or build muscle. Total body workouts will not only improve your cardiovascular abilities, but will also help with improvements in muscle endurance.
(Tahoe Daily Tribune)



SPICES THAT ZAP FAT

Many spices can kill the effects of dangerous fats. Simply adding two tablespoons of seasoning such as rosemary, oregano, cinnamon, turmeric, black pepper, cloves, garlic powder or paprika to meals will help to reduce triglyceride levels – the bad fats that increase your risk of heart disease.

Generally, to lose 450–900 grams a week, you need to burn 500 to 1,000 calories more than you consume each day, through a lower calorie diet and regular exercise.

A recent British study that tracked 6,764 people found that breakfast skippers gained twice as much weight over the course of four years as breakfast eaters.

The average 65kg person can burn an estimated **789 calories per hour** on a treadmill set on a 10% incline at 8km/h, *according to Livestrong.com's My Daily Plate.*

TO BURN FAT, YOU SHOULD AIM TO EXERCISE AT 60-75% OF YOUR MAXIMUM HEART RATE.

Prof. Tim Noakes' diet and book, The Real Meal Revolution, has sold more than 100 000 copies since publication in December 2013, making it South Africa's best-selling book. All profits have gone to the Tim Noakes Foundation, set up to research nutrition and challenge scientific dogma.
Source: www.biznews.com





ONE LARGE EGG HAS 213MG CHOLESTEROL, AND HEALTH EXPERTS SUGGEST LIMITING DIETARY CHOLESTEROL TO 300MG A DAY OR LESS (200 MILLIGRAMS A DAY IF YOU HAVE HEART DISEASE, DIABETES, OR HIGH LDL 'BAD' CHOLESTEROL).

THE DANGERS OF BEING OVERWEIGHT:
- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Cancer
- Heart disease



6 reasons to add coconut oil to your diet

- May help you lose weight due to its satiating fat content as it makes you feel full for longer. You therefore consume fewer calories throughout the day.
- Coconut provides loads of essential proteins.
- It improves the body's ability to absorb calcium and magnesium.
- Coconut oil contains lauric acid, which has anti-bacterial, anti-microbial and anti-viral properties, and can therefore help to ward off potential illnesses.
- Coconut oil contains plenty of saturated fats which help to raise your good (HDL) cholesterol levels.
- Coconut oil has anti-inflammatory properties, so it may help to alleviate pain associated with inflammation.

Source: Real Age

FAT LOSS BY THE NUMBERS

40% OF ADULT WOMEN ARE CLASSIFIED AS OBESE.
Source: Lancet Obesity Study May 2014.



Dutch researchers did tests on 40 men and women, which revealed that those who **drank an alcoholic beverage 30 minutes before a meal** ate quicker and consumed more calories. *(Daily Mail)*

THE IDEAL BODY-FAT RATIO SHOULD BE APPROXIMATELY **16-24%** OF A WOMAN'S BODY WEIGHT.



5 STEPS TO A HEALTHY HEART

1. Eat a diet rich in vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and fibre.
2. Eat fish at least twice a week.
3. Limit how much trans fat you eat.
4. Cut back on foods which contain partially hydrogenated vegetable oils.
5. Limit your intake of salt, sugar, and processed or overly refined carbs.





SOUTH AFRICANS CONSUME BETWEEN 12-24 TEASPOONS OF SUGAR A DAY, ABOUT A THIRD OF WHICH COMES FROM SUGAR-SWEETENED BEVERAGES. ONE SUCH DRINK TYPICALLY CONTAINS EIGHT TEASPOONS OF SUGAR.

SOUTH AFRICAN STATS

According to an article published in the Mail & Guardian on 24 May 2014, South Africa has the highest overweight and obesity rate in sub-Saharan Africa. According to a study published in the medical journal, the Lancet, in May, seven out of 10 women have significantly more body fat than is deemed healthy. These results correlate with a 2011 health survey conducted by pharmaceutical company GlaxoSmithKline that pronounced South Africa "the third-fattest nation in the world" and a Medical Research Council study, which found that 61% of the South African population is overweight or obese. This is almost double the global rate of nearly 30%, according to the Lancet study.

DID YOU KNOW?

100,000 calories of fat on the body (which is the average amount for a size 10 woman) is equal to 54 packs of butter in total.

expert fat loss advice

RAPID WEIGHT LOSS



Q **I've been trying everything to lose weight. I have a goal of 1.5kg a week in mind as I only have a month to lose the most that I can. So far I've been working out twice a day doing cardio (spinning) in the morning, and weights in the evening. My diet is fairly good as I have oats, protein and veg, healthy snacks like fruit and yoghurt, and I've cut out starch and carbs, but nothing is working. I'm also on a thermogenic fat burner along with Slim Cuts, but they don't seem to be working either. What am I doing wrong?** *Kim*

A **While training twice a day can be highly beneficial, it is more important to take the time to focus on your diet, and make up for lost time by eating clean.** The timing of your meals plays a crucial role. For instance, you mention that you like eating fruit. Different fruits have different sugar and calorie contents, which can make or break your weight loss efforts. And the fact that something is deemed healthy doesn't necessarily imply that it's good for weight loss. Green apples are always a winner though. If you do eat sugar-laden fruits do so before or after training as they can aid your performance and intensity in the gym. The same argument would also relate to the veggies and protein that you refer to. Even though oats are a source of complex carbs, which maintain and regulates blood sugar levels, it is still very much a carb. You therefore need to practise portion control as I'm sceptical about the benefit of cutting out all carbs from a diet. Personally, I believe that it is best to follow a sustainable eating plan where carbs are only eaten in the morning, and before and directly after training. Remember to choose complex carbohydrates to keep your diet healthy and clean. In fact, you may find that your refusal to eat carbs is what is actually causing your body to hang on to that body fat.

In terms of your training, you can't go wrong with stepping up that cardio regime. I would recommend that you add some treadmill running to your weekly spinning sessions, along with a few more explosive, high-intensity movements to your weight training.

The thermogenic fat burner that you mention also doesn't give me enough info to make specific recommendations. The brand that you are using, the formulation and the ingredients will all impact on the effectiveness of the product. If you want to lose weight invest in a reputable brand of fat burner and beware of the many gimmicky products out there.

Answered by Angelique van der Linde
www.legallyfit.co.za and
www.jvl.co.za

COMMITMENT PHOBIA

Q **I am a 20-year-old female and I have been battling to lose weight. I struggle to commit myself 100% due to the workload and pressures at medical school. I started to do Taebo a year ago (at least 2-3 times a week), and follow a vegetarian diet, but I still don't see any huge changes. I've only lost 4kg so far, but my goal is to lose 12-15kg. I must admit that I sometimes indulge in a muffin, chocolate, ice cream or Italian breads to make me feel better when I'm stressed. I don't want to give up on trying to reach my goals of becoming fitter, slimmer and healthier. Is there anything I should do to accelerate my weight loss?** *Linda Tshabalala*

A **If it's important to you you'll find a way. If not you'll find an excuse.** As Kenneth Blanchard so rightfully points out, "there's a big difference in being interested and being committed to something". When we're interested in doing something we only do it when it's convenient to do so. When we're committed we won't accept excuses, only results. To me you are only 'interested' in losing that 12-15kg right now, and have yet to commit yourself 100% to that goal. I'm afraid no advice I or anyone else can give you is going to help in any way, that is until you make that commitment to yourself.

As you mention, it's easy to indulge in a muffin – a lot easier than it is to put on your running shoes and take a jog around the block. It's easier to turn to ice cream than head off to the gym, and it's easier to say "I can't, I give up" than it is to say "I can do this!" If you don't want it badly enough then you aren't going to achieve your goal. The choice is yours – take the easy way out and remain overweight and unhealthy, or make the commitment and reap the long-term rewards. I feel that the wise words of Socrates might ignite your fire in this regard. "What a disgrace to grow old without ever seeing the beauty and strength of which your body is capable".

Answered by Mario van Biljon
NHDip Microbiology
www.supashape.com and
www.bodyguru.co.za





IF IT'S IMPORTANT TO YOU, YOU'LL FIND A WAY. IF NOT YOU'LL FIND AN EXCUSE!

FLABBY FIX

A I'm a 36-year-old working mom. I've never been overweight, but I don't dare wear shorts or strappy tops as I'm quite flabby. I recently started eating six meals a day spaced three hours apart. I also changed my sugar intake to sweeteners, and I drink more water. I work out four days a week training legs and abs on one day, arms and shoulders the next, and then the other two days consist of cardio and running. I exercise for about an hour every morning at 05h00 before getting the kids and household ready. My question is, what can I do differently to firm the skin under my arms where they meet my chest, and my inner thighs? *Natasha*

Q Your comment: "I've never been overweight but … I'm quite flabby" highlights the irony of the fact that one can actually be 'skinny' yet 'fat' in terms of body-fat percentage. Remember that your body-fat percentage is the total mass of body-fat divided by your total body mass. So, technically speaking, a woman who weighs 60kg with 15kg of fat (essential body fat and stored body fat) would have 25% body fat. While she may not be considered overweight, at 25% body fat she is likely to be flabby to a degree. If that same woman lost 5kg of body fat and gained 2kg of lean muscle, she would then have a body weight of 57kg with 10kg of body fat (i.e. a body fat percentage of 17.5%). At this body fat percentage she will be significantly firmer and more toned in appearance than her former self. So, if you hope to achieve a firmer, more toned appearance you're going to have to lose a bit of body-fat while simultaneously building some extra lean muscle tissue, particularly in the areas you are concerned about.

I suggest you look at moderating your consumption of starchy carbohydrates and, where possible, substituting these with vegetables and some fruit (fibrous carbs). Each of your six meals or snacks should ideally have a portion of fibrous carbs and a portion (+/- 75-100g) of lean protein such as fish, chicken breast, fat-free cottage cheese or whey protein.

As far as your training goes, I would propose placing a greater emphasis on the weight training component of your weekly exercise schedule to help build lean muscle tissue and tone, specifically the problem areas you mentioned. If you're able to work out four days a week for an hour at a time, my recommendation is to train legs twice a week on non-consecutive days. On the other two days, train arms and shoulders on one day, and back and chest on the other. Back and chest training will certainly assist in firming up the muscles in the area 'under your arms'. While it is very important to maintain good exercise form to ensure optimal muscle fibre recruitment on all exercises, it is equally important to really push yourself to ensure that there is sufficient stress on the muscles to provide the stimulus required for remodelling those flabby body parts. I would propose training at a fairly brisk pace with a 30-60 second break between sets, aiming to complete your resistance training workouts in about 40 minutes. You should ideally then follow that with 20 minutes of cardio. Again, try to perform the cardio at a high intensity.

Answered by Mario van Biljon
NHDip Microbiology
www.supashape.com and
www.bodyguru.co.za

fitness magazine reserves the right to edit any question submitted.

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BURN IT

THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO KEEP YOUR METABOLISM ELEVATED IS BY INCORPORATING HIGH INTENSITY INTERVAL TRAINING CARDIO SESSIONS INTO YOUR WORKOUT ROUTINE. THIS WAY YOU'LL KEEP BURNING CALORIES UP TO 24 HOURS AFTER YOUR WORKOUT HAS ENDED!

MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR WEEK – TRY THIS:

Get the most from your cardio by using a combination of long, slow duration and short, high intensity sessions. Mix this up with functional weight training to get the ultimate calorie burn.

Monday

FUNCTIONAL TRAINING

Go straight from 1 exercise to the next, performing giant sets with no rest between sets.

(Perform 3 sets)

10 minute warm up jog

- 10 push ups
- 20 bunny hops
- 20 jump lunges
- Run for 1 min at fast pace
- 15 dips
- 10 box jumps
- 10 burpees
- 100 rope jumps
- *10 min cool-down walk*



Tuesday

LONG DURATION

60 minutes of low to medium intensity activity like cycling, jogging, stepping or the elliptical trainer.

Keep your heart rate within 60-75% of your MHR

- It's the ideal rate for utilising fat stores for energy.



Wednesday

INTERVAL TRAINING

Use a treadmill or hit the track. You can also perform this cardio workout on a bike.

10 minute warm up jog

- 4-5 intervals of 2 minutes each with your heart rate reaching 85% of MHR. Rest for 1 min between intervals to get heart rate to 60% of MHR
- *10 min cool-down walk*



Thursday

FUNCTIONAL TRAINING

Go straight from 1 exercise to the next, performing giant sets with no rest between sets.

(Perform 3 sets)

10 minute warm up jog

- Run for 1 min fast
- 20 crunches
- 15 kettlebell swings
- 20 walking lunges
- Run for 1 min fast
- 15 burpees
- 15 kettlebell squats with high pull
- 15 mountain climbers
- *10 min cool-down walk*

Friday

LONG DURATION

60 minutes of low to medium intensity activity like cycling, jogging, stepping or the elliptical trainer.



Saturday

FUNCTIONAL TRAINING

Go straight from 1 exercise to the next, performing giant sets with no rest between sets.

(Perform 3 sets)

10 minute warm up jog

- Run 1 min fast
- 10 renegade rows
- 20 bicycle crunches
- 100 jump ropes
- 20 spiderman push ups
- Run 1 min fast
- 20 jump squats
- 15 jump lunges
- *10 min cool-down walk*

Sunday

ACTIVE REST

Sunday should be a rest day to allow your body time to recover, but that doesn't mean you can't be active.

Enjoy a day in the fresh air by planning outings like going to the zoo or botanical garden. This will keep you active and get you the vitamin D your body needs.

*MHR – Maximum Heart Rate



Let us help achieve the new you!

Dr. Marika van Lelyveld

MBChB (Pret.), Hon BSc.Pharm (Potch), MBA(U.K)

FULL HORMONAL TESTS AND TREATMENTS AVAILABLE

Hormones associated with optimal health and weight management.

Adrenal:

DHEA and Cortisol | Sugar or salt craving, belly and love handles, tired, aches & pains.

Testosterone:

Low levels associated with loss of lean body mass, muscle cramps, leg and feet pain, restless legs, and libido.

Estrogen & Progesterone:

Estrogen dominance:
Irritability, mood swings, bloating, headaches, weight gain and anxiety.

Many of these hormones are affected by the contraceptive pill.

TREATMENTS AVAILABLE:

Botulism Toxin, Fillers, Chemical Peels, Spiderveins, Femilift, Fraxel, Tri-Lipo, Hair removal, Acne, Pigmentation and Skin Tightening.



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Ramp up your fat loss

BURN FAT FAST!





THERE ARE CERTAIN FUNDAMENTALS WHEN IT COMES TO FAT LOSS. WHILE YOU CAN LOSE FAT BY STICKING TO MOST OF THESE FUNDAMENTALS, THERE ARE WAYS THAT YOU CAN CHEAT A LITTLE AND STILL ENJOY SOME RESULTS. It's taking advantage of the law of averages – if you're doing most of the stuff right for most of the time (read more about this theory in 'The 80/20 Rule' feature on page 90), then chances are you will lose some weight.

However, this won't work forever. There comes a time when this equals out and you just don't lose any more fat. Some people call it a plateau, others call it reason to quit. We call it reason to recommit and ramp up your fat loss.

Even if you're not at a plateau, but you want your fat loss to happen a bit faster, then take the time to look at the fundamentals and make sure that every single one of them is on point – do everything right, as often as you can, and enjoy the benefits. The fundamentals of fat loss are not some hidden mystery inscribed on an ancient manuscript hidden in a crypt far, far away. No, we all know what they are, and here is how we can make sure we're doing the best we can.

DRESSED BY www.boostsportswear.co.za

Fundamentals of fat loss



DIET

It simply cannot be overstated that diet is the single most important fundamental when it comes to fat loss. We could rattle off the clichés for the next nine pages: you are what you eat, you cannot outtrain a poor diet, it all starts in the kitchen, you cannot outrun a jam doughnut... the fact is: you simply have to eat a clean diet in order to lose fat.

Whether you decide to use a traditional diet that includes protein at every meal, moderate fat, complex carbohydrates and fibrous vegetables, or whether you are going to try the low-carb, high-fat diet, you need to commit to it and then be strict. Many personal trainers allow their clients the 90/10 rule. 90% of the time your eating must be spot on, and 10% of the time you can let it slide a little. Note: slide doesn't mean binge. It means a cheesy pasta meal once a week.

HOW DO YOU DO THIS?

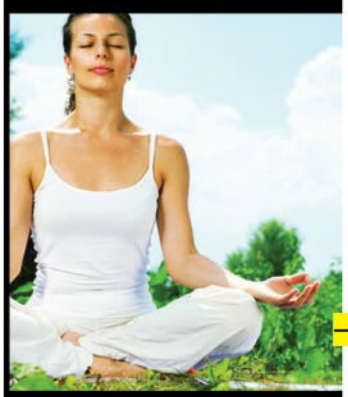
1. Remove junk food from your house.
2. Write a shopping list.
3. Eat single-ingredient, whole foods as much as possible.
4. Prepare meals in advance so you are not caught out.
5. Eat smaller portions more regularly.
6. Do not be lulled into the 'snacking' mindset where little snacks add up during the course of the day and send the calorie count too high.
7. If you can afford it, get a trainer or nutritionist to draw up a personalised diet.
8. Remember to keep it exciting – especially if you don't live alone.

EXERCISE

Include weight and strength training in your weekly exercise routine. Learn to perform the big compound movements as they recruit the most muscle fibre, require a lot of energy and they build the most lean muscle tissue. Remember, we aren't talking about big, bulky behemoth muscle – we are referring to lean, sexy muscle tissue that will sculpt the body you desire. Muscle is metabolically active, and therefore the more you have, the easier it is to burn fat. That reason alone should sell the merits of weight training. Include cardiovascular exercise in your workout routine as well.

HOW DO YOU DO THIS?

1. Learn how to perform compound movements such as squats, presses and stiff-legged deadlifts.
2. Include weight training up to three times a week.
3. Add light to moderate intensity cardiovascular exercise daily.
4. If you can afford it, book a few sessions with a trainer to learn how to do the moves correctly and safely.
5. Get an assessment before starting a new programme: either from a qualified personal trainer or, for more depth, from a biokineticist.



REST

Make sure that you rest enough. Remember that your body recovers at night and many of your hormonal and internal processes happen when your body is at rest. Skimping on the sleep may seem like a more productive thing to do, but the effects on your fat loss are not ideal.

HOW DO YOU DO THIS?

1. Establish a bed time routine.
2. Stop watching TV an hour before bed.
3. Have a hot relaxing bath 30 minutes before bed.
4. Sleep with all electronic equipment off.
5. Try darken the room as much as possible.
6. Silence is golden. If needed, invest in some comfortable ear plugs or ear muffs.
7. Try wake up at the same time every day.

STRESS

Stress is very underrated in terms of the damage it does to your fat loss efforts. Despite making everything less productive (distracted mind and tired body) it has a direct effect on your hormonal profile – cortisol is the main stress hormone and has a nasty reputation for being a culprit when it comes to fat storage. However, it's not just cortisol, as hormones such as adrenalin are also related to stressful situations. Do whatever you can to reduce your stress levels.

HOW DO YOU DO THIS?

1. Exercise daily.
2. Go for walks in a safe environment.
3. Schedule some 'me time' – massages, pedicures, whatever you really enjoy.
4. Schedule time to meet and catch up with friends.
5. Manage your time as efficiently as possible.
6. Consider your career choice, but don't do anything to jeopardise your family or your own wellbeing – that will create more stress.
7. Speak to a psychologist – it may be a cliché but 'getting it off your shoulders' and hearing an outside opinion may just be what the doctor ordered.







SUPPLEMENTATION

Supplements alone will not cause you to lose fat. A very well-known but not publicised enough saying is that supplements provide that "last 5%". If you are doing everything right, which should make up 95% of your fat loss efforts, then supplements will add the last 5%. Ingredients such as CLA and green tea will add some impetus to a perfect meal plan. Supplementing with protein makes getting a meal into your system a little easier too. Protein is the building block of muscle, and so, if you are doing weight training you need protein in your system. Just remember, even protein shakes have a calorie count.



THERE WE HAVE IT. Work on one of these tips a day until you are in a routine where you are doing everything right to support your fat loss efforts. Once you are in a routine that supports fat loss from every aspect of your lifestyle not only will the results be better and faster, but you will be happier and healthier. It's easy to become miserable when trying to lose weight – but a healthy, happy person will experience more success in the long term.

BY DEVLIN BROWN
PHOTOGRAPHED BY Hennie Lombard
MODELLED BY WBFF PRO Jody Calitz
CROP SHORTS BY www.boostgymwear.co.za

Tone and sculpt your booty
LIKE A PRO

BEACH READY WITH 7 MOVES!

It's once again that time of year when the gym is so busy that one has to book classes far in advance, and using the equipment feels like a game of musical chairs. Everyone wants to do all they can in the few weeks before they leave for their summer holidays to get their body as tight and toned as possible.

WHILE WE ALL KNOW that you cannot change your body in a few days, we all also know that eating well and doing the right exercises can make a difference. One only has to look at WBFF Pro and bikini diva Jody Calitz for inspiration. Not only does she have a transformation story, but her journey has been one of commitment, passion and a drive to do this the hard, and right way – no quick fixes for her.

However, what she learnt along the way is invaluable for any woman who wants to take control of her life and body once and for all. Being a trainer and bikini competitor, Jody has been through the trenches and knows what works and what doesn't. She also knows that getting to the gym every day is often not possible, and that in modern life the most precious commodity of all is time.

That's where her Bikini Booty Programme fits in: seven moves that target the areas that everyone wants to improve – thighs, butt and waistline – in just 25 minutes. The best part of this workout? It can be performed anywhere, even on the balcony of your holiday apartment an hour before you head for the beach!

WBFF Pro Jody Calitz's Bikini Booty Programme

IN HER OWN WORDS:

Here are seven functional exercises you can do to help tone, tighten and shape your booty and waist-line for this summer season.

ALL YOU WILL NEED IS YOU! That's right, no equipment or gym needed for this programme, and the best part is that it is completed in under 25 minutes! It can be done in your living room, patio, garden or better yet, on the beach in the sunshine. These are some of my favourite exercises, which I use to help build and maintain my booty through the summer holidays!

Take a rest of 60-90 seconds between moving from exercise to exercise. The fitter and stronger you get the shorter these rest periods can be.



NO EQUIPMENT OR GYM NEEDED FOR THIS PROGRAMME, AND THE BEST PART IS THAT IT IS COMPLETED IN UNDER 25 MINUTES!

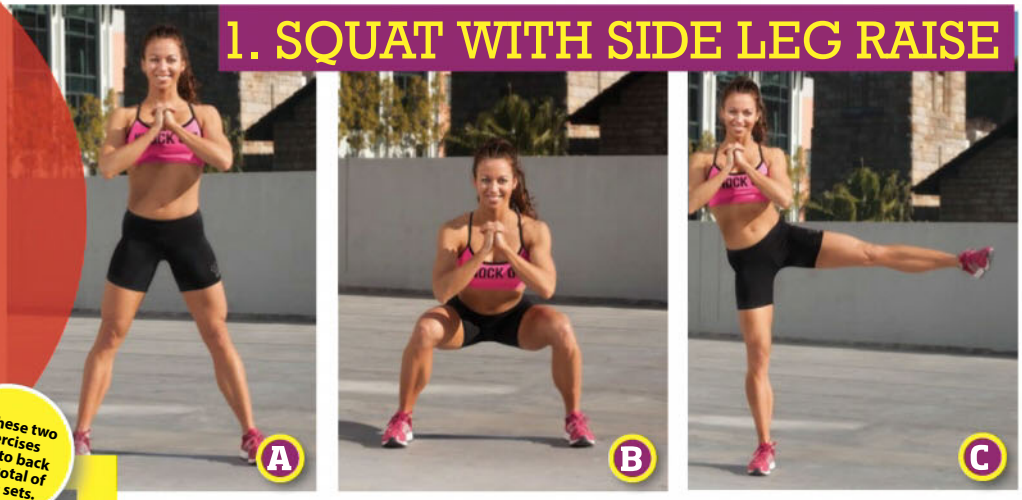
About Jody C

WBFF Pro Bikini Athlete & model, specialised personal trainer, nutritionist and counsellor.

Jody has been in the fitness industry for 14 years, been modelling for seven years and competing on the fitness & bodybuilding circuit for four years. She specialises in female body transformations where she incorporates physical, mental and emotional aspects of changing one's body and ultimately changing one's life. Jody believes that change in the body can't be made if there isn't a change in the mind.

www.jodyc.co.za jodyCalitz @JodyCalitz

1. SQUAT WITH SIDE LEG RAISE

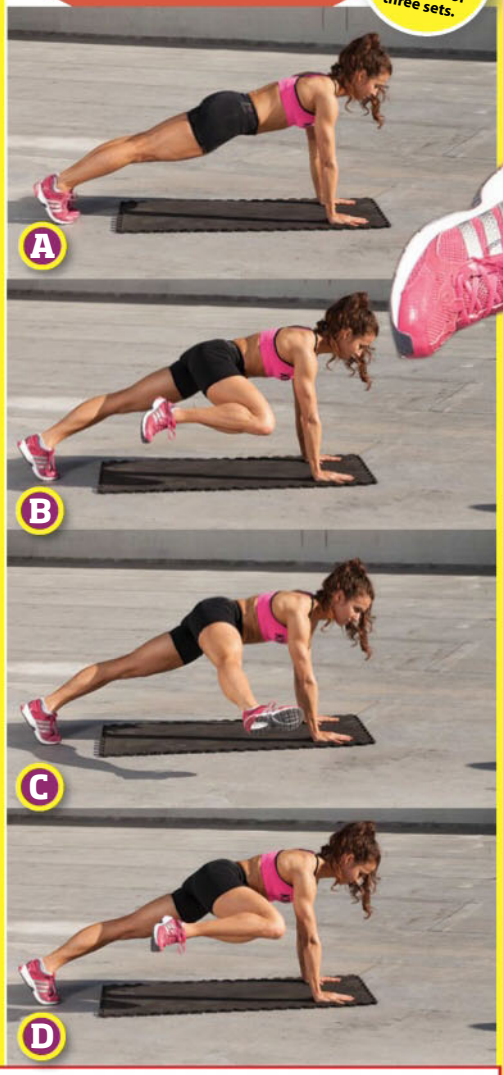


A) Stand with your legs slightly wider than hip-distance apart. Squat down so that you get your thighs parallel with the ground.

B) As you come up from your squat transfer your weight onto your right leg and lift your left leg to the side as high as you can while maintaining a lengthened posture. Alternate legs for a total of one minute.

2. MOUNTAIN CLIMBERS WITH SIDE KICK

Do these two exercises back to back for a total of three sets.



A) Start in the plank position, with your arms straight and your hands on the ground.
B) Pull your right knee towards your right elbow. Keeping that knee as close as you can to your elbow, kick your right foot out to the side by extending through the knee (yes, this is a tough one, but it works so well for bum and tum!)
C) Pull your foot back in before extending the right leg to the back and placing it on the floor. Alternate legs for a total of one minute.

3. LUNGE WITH 'T' LAYOUT

A) Start with your right leg in front and your left leg behind. Keeping your body upright, bend both knees as low as you can.
B) As you come up transfer your weight onto your front leg (right) and lift the left leg up towards the back. Hold on to a railing or wall if you need extra balance or support.



THE KEY IS TO KEEP YOUR CORE TIGHT THROUGHOUT THE MOVE – DON'T LEAN FORWARD OR SIDE TO SIDE.

Repeat this for one minute on the one side before swapping over to the other side.

4. PELVIC LIFT (BRIDGE LIFT) WITH KICK OUT

A) Lying on the floor with both knees bent and your feet flat on the ground, push the pelvis up towards the sky as high as you can by using your glutes and hamstrings.

B) While holding the squeeze, keep the knees together and extend the right leg. Lower the leg down before lowering the pelvis slowly back down to the floor. Repeat the movement, but extend your left leg this time. Alternate legs for a total of one minute.



PRACTISE THE MOVE AND BECOME CONFIDENT IN YOUR BALANCE AND GRACE. BUT REMEMBER: WHEN YOU ARE TIRED YOU MUST STILL KEEP GOOD FORM!



5. SIDE TO SIDE HOVER LUNGE

A) Place your feet as wide as you can and turn your toes out slightly. Bend your right knee and drop as low as you can (making sure your knee stays in alignment with your toes. Don't let your knee bend over your toes and keep both heels flat on the ground at all times).

B) From there, 'hover'/move over to the left side without lifting your body. This means you need to keep your body at the same height.



Continue this slow but steady and controlled movement from side to side for one minute.



FORM TIP:
Avoid leaning forward excessively.





WHILE EACH MOVE HAS A PARTICULAR FOCUS POINT, THIS WORKOUT WORKS MOST OF THE BODY IN ONE GO.

6. PLANK WITH LEG LIFT

A) Start in a plank position, with a flat back and tight tummy, with your belly button pulled up towards the spine.
B) While maintaining that posture, lift your right leg as high as you can by squeezing your glutes (don't shift the hips too much or allow the body to sag). Lower your leg slowly and repeat on the other side.

The key with any plank move is keeping your core tight. Do not let your lower back sag, nor allow your bottom to push up too high.





Alternate legs for a total of one minute.



Do thirty seconds on each side, alternating for three sets – back to back with no recovery.

7. SIDE PLANK WITH A CRUNCH AND KICK-OUT

A) Start in a side plank position with your knee on the ground instead of your ankle, with your right elbow placed directly underneath the shoulder on the ground, and the body in a straight and strong posture. As soon as you have your balance, lift your left leg up slightly into the air and extend your left arm overhead.

B) From there, pull your left knee and elbow towards each other, and allow the hips to drop slightly towards the floor. As you straighten the arm and leg out again make sure you lift the hips back up to their starting position.

FORM TIP: *Make sure to do the exercise in a controlled movement.*

Remember, what you put in is what you get out! So go for it and you will see the results!

AND THERE YOU HAVE IT! 7 MOVES IN UNDER 25 MINUTES TO REALLY TIGHTEN UP THOSE GLUTES, THIGHS AND CORE. PRACTISE THESE MOVES AND THERE REALLY IS NO EXCUSE NOT TO TRAIN WHILE ON HOLIDAY.


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Life Tastes good!
South Africans are waking up to the enormous health and weight-loss benefits of following a low carb – high protein diet.
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HEALTHY, **LOW CALORIE** FOOD FOR EVERY OCCASION

BY MELANIE HEYNS, Features writer

DELICIOUS

right down to the last bite



ITALIAN BROWN RICE SALAD

INGREDIENTS:

750ml vegetable stock
2 tsp olive oil
80g brown onion (chopped finely)
300g brown rice
1 tsp lime rind (grated)
1 garlic clove (crushed)
45g roasted almonds
100g tomatoes (chopped)
100g zucchinis (chopped)
¼ cup parsley (finely chopped)
¼ cup peppers

SAUCE:

2 tbsp lime juice
2 tbsp white wine vinegar
2 tsp dijon mustard

METHOD:

1. Place the vegetable stock in a medium-sized saucepan and bring to the boil.
2. In a large saucepan heat the oil and cook the onion until soft.
3. Add the rice, lime, garlic and stir, making sure to cover the rice.
4. Now add the stock to the rice mixture and bring it all to the boil.
5. Toss in the tomatoes and zucchini, cooking until the zucchini is soft.
6. In a separate bowl, mix together the sauce ingredients.
7. Add the sauce to the rice mixture, tossing gently.
8. Serve this salad warm, topped with fresh parsley (optional).

Brown rice is a healthier choice than white rice as it doesn't share the same refining process, which strips most nutrients and minerals in white rice. Brown rice is also rich in naturally occuring oils, has a high fibre content and helps stabilise blood sugar levels, making it a top choice for carbohydrates in any meal plan.



BOOST THE PROTEIN:
Add 300g of grilled and diced chicken breasts to boost this dish with an additional 87g of protein.

Coconut milk aids in weight loss, improves immune function and reduces the risk of heart disease. New research reveals that people who add more healthy fats into their diets, like coconut milk, eat less overall than those who don't. Healthy fats help satiate the brain receptors that control your appetite, making you feel fuller and satisfied for longer.

CHICKEN MASALA

INGREDIENTS:

2 tbsp peanut oil
200g brown onion
2 cloves garlic (crushed)
1tbsp coriander seeds
1tbsp ground cumin
1tbsp ground turmeric
1tbsp ground masala
2 tsp chilli powder
1.5kg chicken fillets (chopped)
70g tomato paste
375ml chicken stock
¾ cup coconut milk
2 tbsp chopped coriander

METHOD:

1. In a large saucepan, cook the onion and garlic until the onion is soft. Add the coriander seeds and cook for a minute until the seeds start to pop. Add the remaining spices to the saucepan.
2. Add the chicken and cook until it's brown. Stir the chicken to ensure it gets covered in the spices.
3. Stir in the tomato paste, stock and water. Bring it all to the boil. Reduce the heat and allow it to cook until the chicken has cooked through.
4. Add the coconut milk, bring to the boil and allow to thicken (stirring occasionally).
5. Just before you serve, stir in the fresh coriander.

Strawberry frozen delight

INGREDIENTS

1 cup strawberries (chopped)
1 ½ cups Greek yoghurt
$^{1}/_{3}$ cup honey

METHOD

1. Mix all the ingredients together in a blender.
2. Divide the mixture into ice lolly moulds.
3. Place in the freezer overnight.
4. Remove from the freezer and serve.



Yoghurt is loaded with vitamins.
One serving is a significant source of potassium, phosphorous, riboflavin, iodine, zinc, and vitamin B5 (pantothenic acid). Yoghurt also contains B12, which maintains red blood cells and helps keep your nervous system functioning properly.



Strawberries have nutrients that work synergistically and powerfully to fight against oxidation (free radicals) in the body, making it a "superfood". They are also high in vitamin C, which plays a key role in enhancing the immune system.



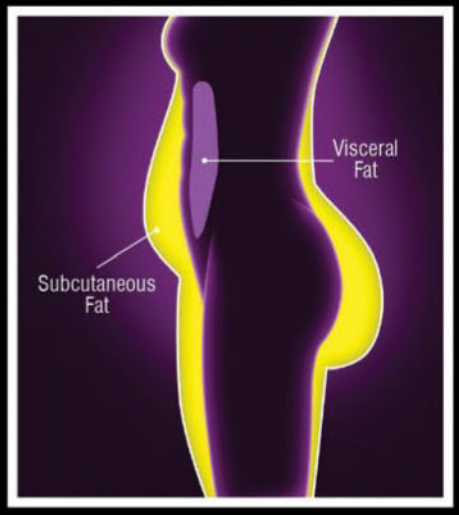
NOTHING COMPARES TO THE OLD "Oxy" UNTIL NOW

Fat is not just fat, if you want to have that lean and toned look, then you want to burn subcutaneous fat. This is the fat that covers your abs and gives you that smooth, sometimes chunky look.

YOUR FAT IS BEING HELD HOSTAGE BY YOUR ALPHA-2 RECEPTOR

Whether it be your tummy, thighs or butt, we all have areas where the fat just never seems to leave. This is because your Alpha-2 receptor is holding it hostage. When activated, these receptors shut down fat loss in these areas and try to store even more fat like a squirrel storing nuts for the winter. Fortunately core ingredients in OxyBurn has been suggested in studies to block the Apha-2 receptor.

GET THAT SHREDDED LOOK WITHOUT THE TERRORISING EFFECTS OF THE FAT HOSTAGE RECEPTOR!



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EVOLVE NUTRITION

Power up the protein

Add your favourite flavour whey protein powder to make this a perfect post-workout smoothie.

TIMING: DRINK UP FOR YOUR MID-MORNING SNACK!

Banana almond smoothie

Ingredients:

1 banana
125ml plain fat-free yoghurt
60ml oat bran
1 tsp natural almond butter or
5 almonds
250ml cold water or ice
1 scoop protein powder

Method:

1. Mix together the cup of water and almond butter (or almonds) in the blender.
2. Add the banana, oat bran, and protein powder, and blitz until smooth.
3. Finally add the plain fat-free yoghurt and process it all together.
4. Serve in a tall glass or chill until it's ready to be served.

AWESOME ALMOND

Almonds lower the rise in blood sugar and insulin after meals.

BANANA SECRETS

One banana has 11% of the RDA of dietary fibre and only about 108 calories. The fibre in bananas not only keeps digestion regular, but also helps maintain low blood sugar and curbs overeating.

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BY DEVLIN BROWN



Eat fat to shed fat

A LOOK AT THE BANTING DIET FROM A WEIGHT LOSS PERSPECTIVE

The Real Meal Revolution aims to open people's eyes to the 'myth of low-fat eating'. It's packed full of LCHF recipes.

WE ALL KNOW THAT FAT LOSS HAPPENS AS A RESULT OF A LIFESTYLE CHANGE. IT'S A COMPLICATED PROCESS AND YET IT'S ALSO QUITE SIMPLE. THAT DOESN'T MEAN THAT IT'S EASY THOUGH – SIMPLE AND EASY ARE NOT THE SAME THING.

Let's define "quite simple". This means that you must understand that diet makes up the biggest part of any fat loss programme. Some people like to give it a ratio: 20% training, 80% diet, or 30% training, 70% diet. We prefer not to put a figure on it. The fact is that if you want to lose weight and change your body composition your diet will make or break that goal – you cannot out train a poor diet.

Fat loss fundamentals

The factors apart from diet that influence fat loss include: exercise, disease, stress, rest, and, of course, hormones. Every single one of the fat loss factors, from exercise and diet to stress and rest influence the hormonal environment in our bodies – they affect cortisol, insulin, leptin, oestrogen and growth hormone, to name a few. And so, it would not come as a surprise that hormones and a balanced hormonal environment are crucial for losing weight and fat. A healthy diet is known to have a positive effect on hormones. Eating well and getting the nutrients we need goes a long way to keeping this balance (as well as living a lifestyle conducive to overall health as environmental factors such as stress and toxins also have a negative effect on hormonal balance).

In the last issue of ***fatloss***, available on Zinio and Magzter, we went into great detail on the role different hormones play in fat loss. We suggest getting hold of this as it is vitally important to understand, especially when you are frustrated at slow or stalled results.

The low-carb, high-fat (LCHF) or Banting diet has been popularised in SA by Sports Scientist Prof. Tim Noakes. While other magazines, newspapers and websites may report on his book The Real Meal Revolution, or the controversy around the diet, we feel that by not explaining the fundamentals of the diet the general media is missing the point and, more importantly, you, the consumer, are less able to make an informed decision for yourself.

LCHF goes hand in hand with controlling insulin levels, an important hormone that relates to weight gain and the ability to lose weight and fat effectively. Noakes explains in great detail why he came to this point – he is a diabetic. However, one of the spinoffs (or side effects) of the LCHF diet is that if it's followed correctly most people report weight loss, particularly in the first few months. To understand this, we must understand insulin.

Insulin

Insulin is a hormone produced in the pancreas. It's central in regulating carbohydrate and fat metabolism in the body. It causes cells in the liver, skeletal muscles and fat tissue to absorb glucose from the blood. In the liver and skeletal muscles glucose is stored as glycogen, and in fat cells it is stored as triglycerides. With the exception of diabetes and metabolic syndrome, insulin is provided within the body at a constant proportion to remove excess glucose from the blood, which would otherwise be toxic.

Put very simply, insulin moves sugar in the bloodstream (that we obtain from the food we eat) into cells throughout the body. It is first converted into glycogen, which is stored in the liver and muscles, and once these reserves are full any excess glycogen is converted into fat.

Noakes says that eating LCHF works for people who are insulin resistant. This is where much of the misinformation around the diet exists. What does Noakes actually say regarding who should eat LCHF?

"You don't have to listen to anyone, you can just try it and see if it works. If it doesn't make a difference please continue to eat the way you were, but so many people are living a sub-standard life because their eating is rubbish and they are being told 'oh you must eat a balanced diet and Dr Noakes is wrong, and carbohydrates are healthy', and they may well be, but for most of us they aren't," he told us.

Put very simply, insulin moves sugar in the blood stream (that we obtain from the food we eat) into cells throughout the body.

Insulin resistance

Before looking at LCHF and its effects on weight loss we have to understand why the diet is being put forward for people with insulin resistance.

"The insulin in insulin resistant people is not as effective, so you need more and more. That insulin works on the insulin sensitive tissues (because they continue to work normally) but the insulin insensitive tissues don't respond to the insulin, and that is why your glucose stays elevated for a long time," says Noakes.

That seems fair enough, but then what about someone who gets a healthy blood sugar reading when they do a blood test? We all know that blood sugar tests are one of the first things we have tested when looking at our general health, precisely because of the diabetes pandemic. If we get a good blood sugar reading, is that a free pass to go and eat as we please?

"Your glucose can be completely normal because you are over-secreting insulin, and that's the first phase of diabetes. We can only tell if we measure your insulin levels at the same time as your blood sugar. If your insulin is in the normal range then you are not insulin resistant. But many people are and they don't know it. Obesity is not the only indicator of insulin resistance. Thin people can also be insulin resistant, like I was. I was thin my whole life until the last ten years or so, and I didn't measure my insulin," explains Noakes. "So, my glucose was relatively alright but my insulin would have been high, but it was undetected."

"OBESITY IS NOT THE ONLY INDICATOR OF INSULIN RESISTANCE. THIN PEOPLE CAN ALSO BE INSULIN RESISTANT."

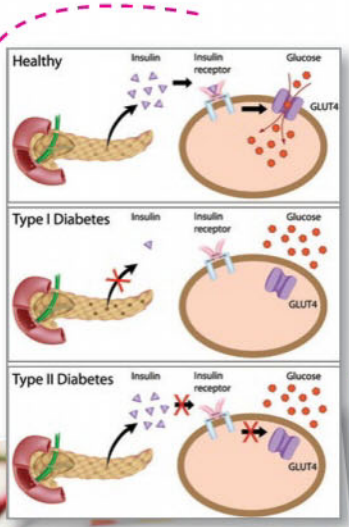
If that's the case then that's worrying because almost every general wellness programme relies on the simple finger-prick test.

The question then becomes: what happens if insulin is not in the normal range, but remains undetected?

Noakes explains: "Insulin is over-secreted, and you cope in terms of glucose levels, but it is still driving all the other problems: it is causing your blood pressure to go up, it is causing your HDL cholesterol to go down, your triglycerides to go up. It is doing all those damaging things, but your glucose is still fine. Eventually the pancreas can't keep up, and can't produce enough insulin – now your insulin goes down and your glucose goes up, which is when high glucose levels are detected."

That scenario, if accepted by a potential LCHF convert, is convincing in terms of the need to prevent excess insulin secretion over an extended amount of time. However, the immediate response would be to ask about prevalence. Does Noakes have any figures for how prevalent insulin resistance is?

"The only figures I have for the prevalence of insulin resistance is for America – there 65% of people over 65 are insulin resistant. If you look at obese people and presume the majority are insulin resistant, then you can get an idea of the prevalence in South Africa," he explains.



turn page

"The only figures I have for the prevalence of insulin resistance is for America – there 65% of people over 65 are insulin resistant. If you look at obese people and presume the majority are insulin resistant, then you can get an idea of the prevalence in South Africa," he explains.





There are people on this diet who do not lose weight, and they do everything right – and it is because they do not cut their calories.

"The merits of the LCHF diet for weight loss are clear to see and, as Mugal-Singh said, if it results in fat loss then it's a viable option, even if only used over the short-to-medium term."

Where does dietary fat fit in?

In order to get the full picture of the diet you need to understand that for people like Noakes fat is seen as an energy source and not the boogeyman we have all been taught. LCHF advocates argue that it doesn't cause all the bad things we've been taught – heart disease, obesity and more, and that the culprit is actually sugar. It's a rather long explanation to go into how this argument has played out, and dates back decades, but suffice to say that mainstream society, and even people who do not support LCHF, have given in and admitted that fat (and saturated fat) is not the absolute villain it once was believed to be.

The degree to which someone supports eating saturated fats depends on if that person prefers to stick with traditional dietetics guidelines or if one prefers to be on the other side of the fence that says it's only a matter of time before our mainstream knowledge supports LCHF eating. To illustrate this, have a look at what Noakes says about fat and cholesterol:

"Cholesterol is an essentially useless predictor of heart attack risk," says Noakes. "The keys appear to be the number of LDL particles and their size. Whilst the size goes up on this diet – which is good – the number may also go up which is not perhaps so good. But we really don't know in the long term. My view is that you must treat as many risk factors as you can and the LCHF diet does that, especially in insulin resistant people. So, if you are insulin resistant, you will benefit hugely in many ways."

What is clear here is that there is no absolute long-term certainty about this yet. At the 2014 Discovery Vitality Summit at the Sandton Convention Centre Noakes drew analogies with things in medicine we take for granted today that were outrageous to the mainstream at the time. However, this simply cannot be proved beyond reasonable doubt now, and his critics at the selfsame summit were fast to point it out.

But this is where, as Noakes put it, the consumer herself has to make decisions based on weighing risk with reward. It is almost certain that in time, with advances in science and enough time to monitor cause and effect, the safety of saturated fat pertaining to health will be more certain. The LCHF diet will have had time to either withstand its criticism or be pushed into the annuls of yet another failed fad, as the opponents like to call it.



Noakes believes that it is the stimulation of hunger – be it through our modern carb-laden diets or exercise – that stops most of us from losing weight.

Losing fat

The point of the LCHF diet for people like Noakes is to control lifestyle diseases such as diabetes. However, we have already ascertained that the diet has a beneficial side effect – weight loss, and so healthy people use the diet to lose fat. Why is this?

To lose fat your body needs to use your stored fat as fuel, and one way to do this is by removing your body's dominant fuel source – glucose. This is achieved by cutting out sugar and carbohydrates. Once this happens your body needs another fuel source and so starts using your body fat, as well as the increased fat that you're eating in your diet. Eventually your body doesn't look for glucose any more and becomes proficient at using fat for fuel. This is why Noakes says this diet is good for controlling diabetes – as there is no longer the sugar spikes and the concomitant effects on insulin.

By eating a high-fat diet you don't have to go hungry either, like you would on a traditional diet, and this is vital. Noakes, for instance, says that hunger is the number one reason people don't lose weight and fail in their diets. If you are satiated you are likely to keep up your fat loss efforts. Eating fat is said to cause a feeling of satiation among eaters, far more than is possible with a low-fat diet.

What does Noakes say? "To lose weight on the diet you need to cut calories. Now, most people will lose weight on the diet because they will get satiated from the fat and the protein, and they aren't satiated by the carbohydrates. Hunger, in my view, is driven by carbohydrates. I have probably cut my calories by 30-40%. The amount I eat now is astonishingly little and I am always satiated. I consciously avoid anything that is sweet because I know that if I was to eat a little bit of sweetness I would be 5kg heavier, as I would be eating substantially more calories because I would be more hungry. You have got to get rid of hunger to lose weight. It is key. There are people on this diet who do not lose weight, and they do everything right – and it is because they do not cut their calories. So, in them, the brain didn't adapt, and it is still making them hungry even though they don't need to be hungry. We can't explain that at the moment. If you want to stimulate hunger all you do is you go and follow







your current diet and you will become hungry, and you cannot lose weight if you are hungry. The whole model of calorie in versus calorie out is useless because it cuts the brain out, removes the hunger issue."

At the Discovery Vitality Summit Dr Vash Mungal-Singh, CEO of the Heart and Stroke Foundation, said that the number one and most immediate task is to get people to lose weight. Obesity is the number one problem that needs to be tackled, she said. In saying this, she went so far as to say that those who want to lose weight can choose whichever diet they want as long as it results in the desired fat loss. To this end, she said that LCHF works, and a lot of weight can be, and is, lost on this diet. Then, she said, one can slowly transition back to a more holistic diet, including the low GI, unprocessed carbohydrates that LCHF forbids, but the food pyramid promotes, as well as lowering the saturated fat intake.



Noakes says that hunger is the number one reason people don't lose weight and fail in their diets.

Half measures

When asked at the Vitality Summit whether someone can use some elements of the LCHF diet and some elements of traditional diets as a compromise, Noakes was very clear in his answer. Absolutely not, he said. It is all or nothing. This is where he gets criticised for being an extremist, and scientists tell us that extremism is a red flag. This is why he is often ridiculed (having gone from a high-carbohydrate advocate to the opposite end of the spectrum).

However, this knee-jerk reaction and ridicule misses the key point of why he advocates the LCHF diet in the first place: it is about controlling insulin. If you suddenly eat some sugar or carbohydrates as a compromise then you are doing the opposite of what the diet sets out to do in the first place, especially if you're insulin resistant.

However, this doesn't apply to people who are not insulin resistant, and, hypothetically, it is therefore fair to posit that tests for insulin resistance may well answer whether one has to be militant or not when choosing how to utilise LCHF eating. We know that you can lose fat while eating moderate and controlled low GI carbs if you are otherwise healthy and are able to metabolise carbohydrates.

And so what is the consumer left with? LCHF, traditional low-fat diets, carb cycling and more, and a sense of bewilderment and confusion.

At the end of the day you need to cut down calories and do so in a way that is not going to leave you feeling hungry and miserable, or worse, malnourished. If you suffer from insulin resistance or are diabetic or pre-diabetic it will do you no harm to talk to the relevant experts about the benefits of LCHF.

Like everything else in life, we recommend educating yourself and making the right choices for yourself based on the actual facts, and not hype or dogma. The merits of the LCHF diet for weight loss are clear to see and, as Mugal-Singh said, if it results in fat loss then it's a viable option, even if only used over the short-to-medium term.



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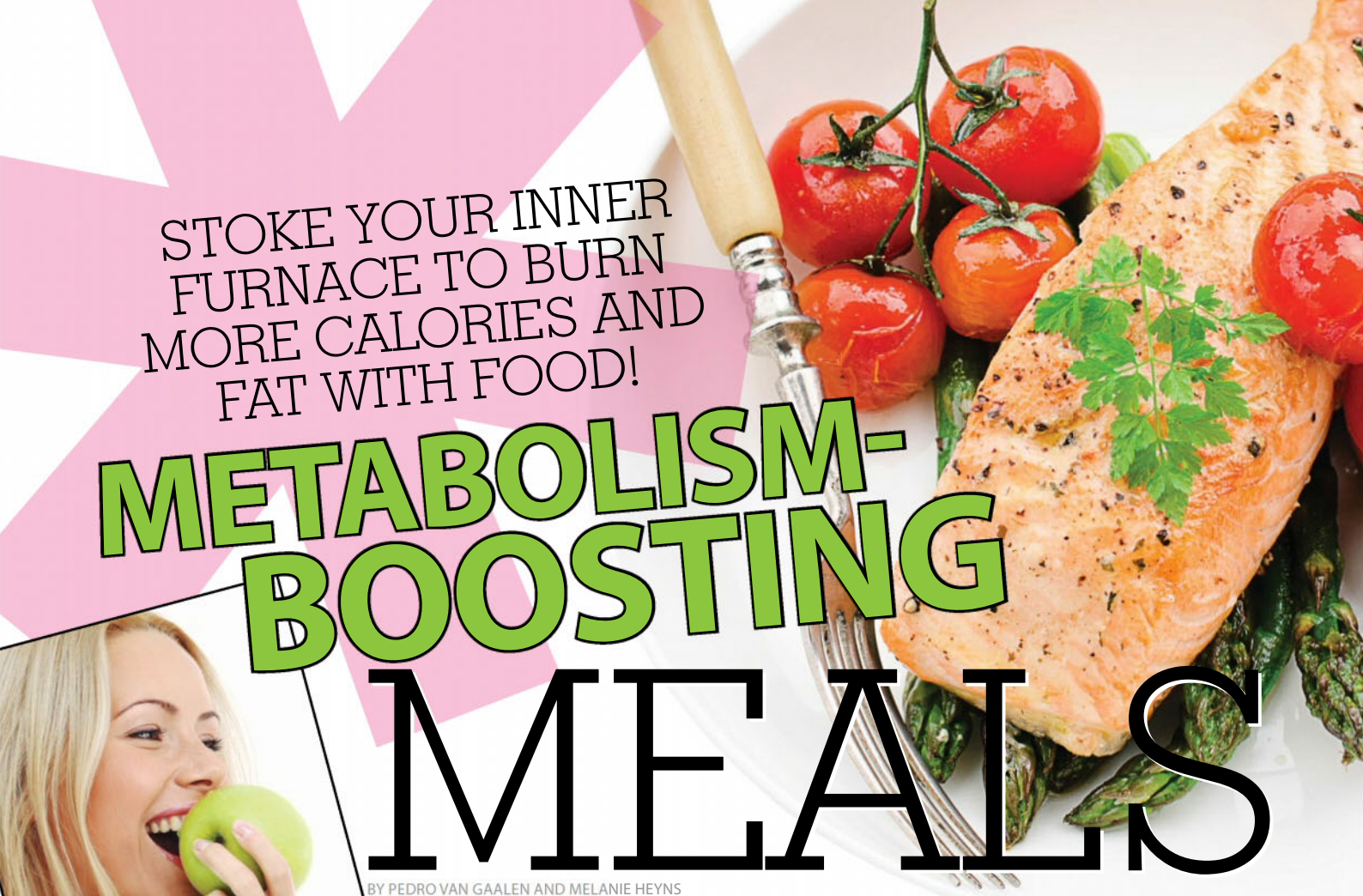
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METABOLISM-BOOSTING MEALS



It is extremely important to chew your food properly to aid the digestion process.

BY PEDRO VAN GAALEN AND MELANIE HEYNS

When it comes to losing weight and burning as much fat as possible we basically have two tools at our disposal – diet and exercise.

The benefits of exercise are well known; it helps to burn calories to create a negative caloric balance, and weight training helps to build more muscle, which raises our metabolic rate.

And the role that the right diet plays is also well documented, both in this issue and various issues of *fitness* magazine. Eating clean, controlling your calorie intake and managing your insulin response are the fundamental dietary guidelines needed to lose weight and drop body fat.

However, there is another way in which the food you eat can impact on your weight-loss efforts – by boosting your metabolism even further. Loosely described, your metabolism is the rate at which your body generates and consumes energy in the form of calories. A higher metabolism therefore enables you to burn more fat and lose weight faster. As already mentioned, factors such as the amount of muscle you have and your daily activity levels affect your metabolism.

What you may not realise is the type, number, size, composition and frequency of the meals you eat also impacts on your metabolism and, subsequently, your daily energy expenditure, through a process known as the thermic effect of food. This refers to the increased heat generated by your body through the digestion process.

This thermogenesis increases your metabolism for a short amount of time as your body will consume energy in order to digest your food. This will increase energy expenditure above your normal resting metabolic rate, albeit for a short period of time.

MEAL COMPOSITION

It is generally estimated that up to 10% of the caloric value of the food you eat is used for energy in the digestion process. However, certain foods elicit a greater thermic effect than others. For instance, certain types of fat and simple carbohydrates are easy to process and therefore have less of a thermic effect.

Protein, on the other hand, is harder to process and therefore elicits a much larger thermic effect during the digestion process. This has been corroborated in two studies, one published in the 2004 issue of the Journal of the American College of Nutrition and another published in the May 2008 issue of the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition. They both found that protein-rich diets not only helped participants increase thermogenesis, but also increased satiety and helped them maintain

ON AVERAGE, 27% OF THE CALORIES YOU CONSUME FROM PROTEIN ARE USED IN THE DIGESTION PROCESS.

a leaner body mass overall.

On average, 27% of the calories you consume from protein are used in the digestion process. This is attributable to the fact that protein goes through a number of catabolic reactions to break the macronutrient down into the component amino acids – the form our muscles need for repair and growth.

Aside from the great protein content, eating more fish is also a great way to boost your metabolism through your diet thanks to its EPA and DHA content. These omega-3 fatty acids may have the power to dramatically boost your metabolism by about 400 calories per day, with researchers from the University of Western Ontario reporting that fish oil increases levels of fat-burning enzymes and decreases levels of fat-storage enzymes.

The same principle applies to complex carbohydrates, even though the effect is much smaller. Only 7% of the calories consumed are used in the digestion process, on average. The bioavailability and the glycaemic index (GI) of the carbohydrate source are key factors in this equation as this determines how quickly the energy is released. Low GI complex carbohydrates tend to have a slightly higher thermic effect because they actively release energy over a longer period of time because they have more bonds to break in the macronutrient structure.

Oatmeal, brown rice, vegetables like broccoli, apples, pears and citrus fruits are also ideal food options to help boost your metabolic rate because the body has to work harder to break down both the fibre contained in many of these foods, as well as the complex carbohydrates.

However, when discussing the impact of carbohydrates on our metabolism it is worth noting that there is also an important correlation between insulin sensitivity and the thermic effect that food can have on your body. Individuals who are more insulin-sensitive enjoy a significantly more pronounced thermic effect, while individuals with increasing insulin resistance experience negligible to zero thermic effects. This is because insulin is the mediator of the thermic effect of food and diet-induced thermogenesis.

As obese people are generally insulin resistant, which accelerates weight gain this can have a major impact on the thermic effect of food. *Researchers at Columbia University studied two groups of men who were either lean, with less than 15% body fat, or obese with more than 25% body fat. Researchers examined the differences in the thermic effect of food in different situations. The results were startling as the thermic effect in the lean individuals when compared to the obese subjects was 70% higher at rest, 175% higher after exercise and 316% higher over the course of 30 minutes of exercise.* This means that simply being lean and more muscular can significantly increase the thermic effect that food has on your daily calorie consumption, not just your basal metabolic rate (as muscle is more metabolically active than fat).

Certain foods also purportedly have a negative calorie effect, which basically means that it takes more calories to digest those foods than they provide. Fat, on the other hand, is relatively easy to process and therefore has little thermic effect. Fats have a thermic effect of around 3% on average.

It is also important to note that the thermic effect of food generally applies at a macronutrient level. As such, claims that partially chewing food will significantly increase the thermic effect of the food are unfounded. It is extremely important to chew your food properly to aid the digestion process. If you don't, the only thing that you will increase is your post-meal discomfort due to indigestion and bloating.

Oatmeal, brown rice, vegetables like broccoli, apples, pears and citrus fruits are ideal food options to help boost your metabolic rate.



Eating a regular meal pattern of six meals per day resulted in a significantly higher thermic effect.

MEAL TIMING

The other primary determinants of the thermic effect of food are the timing, quantity and composition of the meals you eat. Eating six to eight regular meals a day can have a cumulative effect that will add up to something more substantial in terms of your overall weight loss efforts.

However, regularity is the important factor to bear in mind. Researchers at the Centre for Integrated Systems Biology and Medicine, Institute of Clinical Research and School of Biomedical Sciences, Queen's Medical Centre, University of Nottingham in the United Kingdom reported that eating an irregular meal pattern of three to nine meals per day resulted in a significantly lower thermic effect than that found in subjects eating a regular meal pattern of six meals per day.

This flies in the face of conventional wisdom, which dictates that to lose weight we should eat less, less frequently, to reduce overall calorie consumption. However, this is not the case. In fact, this can decrease your metabolic rate by up to 30% because your body cannot perform its required functions and sustain muscle tissue without an adequate amount of food. By eating less you are compromising your muscle tissue because it places your body in a catabolic state. What's worse is the fact that the subsequent state of starvation will cause your body to hang on to every calorie you feed it.

LINK TO EXERCISE

Interestingly, various studies, including the one referenced earlier in this article, have also found that regular exercise can positively impact on the thermic effect of food. You can increase it by doing both aerobic training of sufficient duration and intensity, as well as anaerobic weight training. The studies showed that people who habitually exercise have a greater thermic effect when compared to sedentary people, even if the two groups have similar fat-free masses. However, this increase is often marginal, amounting to about 7-8 cal per hour.

Regardless, the truth is that a diet with adequate amounts of protein, fibre, high GI carbs and the right fats, consumed at regular intervals over a prolonged period of time will have a cumulative effect that can assist with your weight and fat loss goals. The important thing is to combine these tips with the right exercise and overall eating plan to start seeing results. It is simply a matter of eating intelligently and being consistent with your approach so that, over time, your efforts will yield the results you want.

Looking for a great fitness workout? Don't miss our full body functional feature on page 66.



NATURAL METABOLISM BOOSTERS

There are also certain natural substances and ingredients that you can use to enhance the metabolic effects of food. A study published in the August 2006 issue of Physiology and Behavior found that capsaicin, black pepper, ginger, mixed spices, green tea, black tea and caffeine all significantly impacted metabolism. Capsaicin, the compound found in hot red peppers had the biggest impact on metabolism as it increased thermogenesis, energy expenditure and fat mobilisation after a meal, which all helped to decrease overall body fat. However, all these foods were found to have the ability to increase thermogenesis, satiety and oxidise fat to some degree.

GINSENG

Chinese and native American cultures have used ginseng for years for both culinary and medicinal purposes. Research has shown that ginseng can strengthen your immune system, improve memory and lower cholesterol. Ginseng will also improve your weight loss efforts because it revs up your metabolism, which means you burn more calories each day, even at rest. Ginseng gives you a major boost in energy too, so you'll be able to exercise harder, for longer to burn even more calories.

CINNAMON

Cinnamon is rich in magnesium, iron, calcium and fibre. Since medieval times people have used cinnamon to cure diarrhoea, indigestion and bloating. Cinnamon is also great for lowering blood sugar levels and bad cholesterol. When you consume cinnamon your body tries to break it down through a chemical reaction. This process boosts your metabolic rate due to the subsequent rise in body temperature.

BLACK PEPPER

For centuries practitioners of Eastern medicine have known of the benefits of black pepper, using it effectively to

CAYENNE PEPPER

Cayenne pepper is already used in many ways, for both medicinal and culinary purposes. Capsaicin, a compound found in cayenne peppers, is what gives them their heat, and is also the substance that boots your metabolism. Capsaicin also stimulates receptors in our central nervous system (the sensory neurons) which creates a heat-producing effect. This whole process is known as diet-induced thermogenesis and it burns calories instead of storing them as fat. Researchers have found that capsaicin is also beneficial for digestion, stimulating the kidneys and easing pain.



treat diarrhoea and various other gastrointestinal issues. Piperine, which is a major constituent of black pepper, has been found to inhibit fat cell differentiation. Piperine interferes with the functioning of the genes that are responsible for forming new fat cells. This interference then sets off a chain reaction which helps to keep the formation of fat cells in check.



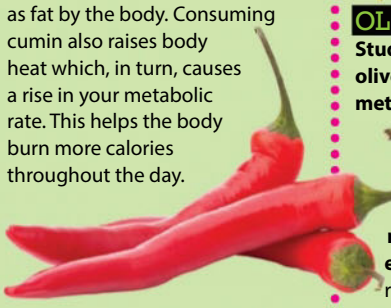
TURMERIC

Throughout history turmeric has formed part of health remedies, culinary experiences and has also been used as a dye. Although there is no significant research that proves turmeric can help with weight loss, there is evidence to suggest that turmeric may help prevent the regrowth of fat after weight loss. The exact amount of turmeric it would take to prevent this regrowth has not been established though.



CUMIN

Cumin is a rich source of ferrous (iron) sulfate, which is an essential part of digestive and metabolic enzymes, as well as haemoglobin. As such, cumin helps to improve the supply of oxygen to all bodily tissues, assists our bodies in the energy production process, helps to give our immune system a boost and is a great digestive aid. By improving the digestive process the body can better assimilate and absorb nutrients, which can help to reduce the amount of food that is stored as fat by the body. Consuming cumin also raises body heat which, in turn, causes a rise in your metabolic rate. This helps the body burn more calories throughout the day.



CHILLI PEPPERS

It is no secret that when you eat hot foods such as curries and spices it causes your body heat to rise. This subsequently causes a rise in your metabolic rate as your body works to return itself to a state of homeostasis. Chilli peppers that contain capsaicin are the most effective at causing this rise in body heat, as previously explained.

LENTILS

Lentils are rich in soluble fibre, which lowers your cholesterol and helps to increase feelings of satiety during meals. When you feel full you're less likely to overeat, which is a major cause of weight gain. Lentils also tie up carbohydrates in the digestive system, which means the body absorbs them at a slower rate. This stabilises your blood sugar levels and slows the fat storage process.

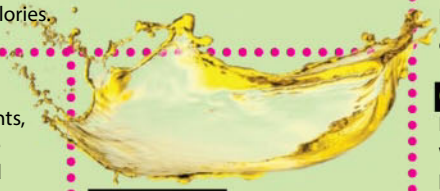




The selenium and magnesium in mustard seeds makes it a good anti-inflammatory.

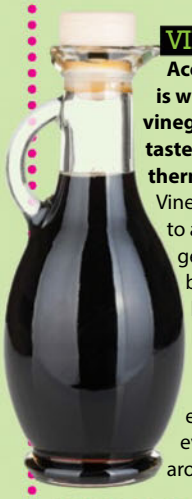
MUSTARD

For something so small mustard seeds are full of nutrition. One mustard seed has a healthy amount of selenium, the amino acid tryptophan, omega-3 fatty acids, phosphorus, manganese, magnesium, iron, calcium, niacin and zinc. There are many health benefits associated with mustard, for example, the phytonutrients in mustard seeds protect against gastrointestinal cancer, with the selenium and magnesium making it a good anti-inflammatory. Mustard, like all other spicy foods, causes a rise in our metabolisms through diet-induced thermogenesis, which helps to burn more calories.



OLIVE OIL

Studies have shown that olive oil can 'turn up' your metabolism as it is a rich source of the monounsaturated fatty acid oleic acid, which may have metabolism-boosting effects. A study conducted by researchers at Sao Paulo State University in Brazil found that rats fed a diet rich in olive oil had higher rates of fat oxidation and energy expenditure compared to those without it.



VINEGAR

Acetic acid, which is what gives vinegar its sour taste, increases thermogenesis. Vinegar is also known to activate certain genes in our bodies that can limit the amount of fat stored around our waistlines as they ensure that fat is evenly distributed around our bodies.



CHROMIUM

Chromium enhances the way and the efficiency with which your body taps into fat stores for energy. This substance can be found naturally in tomatoes, and in supplemental form. Meat, eggs, green pepper, apples, banana and spinach are also good sources for chromium.

CALCIUM

Research shows that calcium, which can be found in dairy products such as yoghurt, cheese and buttermilk, may reduce weight gain by hindering the absorption of fat in the small intestine.





ICE

By adding ice to your drinks, which should consist mainly of water, you force your body to expend more energy as it first has to heat the liquid to body temperature.



OTHER FOODS THAT HELP WITH INCREASED METABOLISM ARE MIXED SPICES, GREEN TEA, BLACK TEA AND CAFFEINE.

PAYING THE HIGH METABOLIC & PSYCHOLOGICAL COSTS OF RESTRICTIVE DIETING

REBOUND WEIGHT GAIN

BY PEDRO VAN GAALEN, Managing Editor

FOR MANY PEOPLE WHO EMBARK ON A WEIGHT LOSS PROGRAMME, MONTHS OF HARD WORK AND DEDICATION ARE OFTEN UNDONE WHEN THEIR DIETS END. THIS REBOUND WEIGHT GAIN HAS BECOME SYNONYMOUS WITH SEVERE RESTRICTIVE DIETING, WHICH IS WHY YO-YO DIETING HAS BECOME THE NORM.



*Widely available facts state that about **80% of people who find temporary weight loss success from dieting regain all** or more of what they initially lost.*

To be more specific, researchers at UCLA determined that dieting is a consistent predictor of weight gain as up to two-thirds of the people in the 31 long-term studies reviewed regained more weight than they lost. Even worse, according to Wellsphere, a website sponsored by Stanford University, only 5% of people who lose weight on a crash diet will keep the weight off.

To further illustrate this propensity to regain weight after a diet, a 2011 study conducted on over 2,000 sets of twins from Finland, aged 16 to 25, showed that the twin who embarked on just one intentional weight loss episode was two to three times more likely to become overweight, compared to their non-dieting twin counterpart. Furthermore, the risk of becoming overweight increased in a dose-dependent manner, with each dieting episode. The results of this study indicate that dieting itself, independent of genetics, is significantly associated with accelerated weight gain and increased the risk of becoming overweight. Researchers concluded that "the more people engage in dieting, the more they gain weight in the long-term".

Another study that looked at the relation between dieting and weight change among pre-adolescents and adolescents, involving nearly 17,000 kids between the ages of nine and 14, found that the risk of binge eating increased with the frequency of dieting. The boys and girls who dieted frequently were five to 12 times, respectively, more likely to report binge eating compared to their non-dieting counterparts. The researchers concluded that "in the long term, dieting to control weight is not only ineffective, it may actually promote weight gain".

This lack of long-term success means that many serial dieters develop an unhealthy relationship with food. They blame themselves for their inability to keep the weight off, with their cravings and unhealthy eating habits the root cause of their woes. And this vicious cycle of weight loss and rebound weight gain has also been linked to some serious health conditions, including high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, heart disease and cancer.

MORE THAN MENTAL

While the biggest reasons that many people regain weight after a diet is their failure to change their habits, and the fact that severe calorie restriction is unsustainable, there may be more to your inability to keep the lost weight off.

Many will blame their lack of willpower to resist calorific and sugary foods, but there is a growing body of evidence that shows that specific physiological changes take place after weight loss, including changes in appetite-regulating hormones like ghrelin and leptin, which drives your desire to eat.

Brain scans on chronic dieters have also revealed that weight loss makes it harder for us to exercise self-control and resist tempting food. And the more people diet the stronger these effects tend to become. This basically means that the process of dieting itself increases your body's propensity to gain weight, a response that scientists have termed 'dieting-induced weight-gain'.

Hunger is an extremely powerful impulse as it is hardwired into our subconscious as a survival mechanism. While the impulse to eat can be triggered due to psychological reasons, the hunger we experience after restrictive dieting has now been shown, through numerous studies, to serve a very specific purpose, one that can be almost impossible to override.

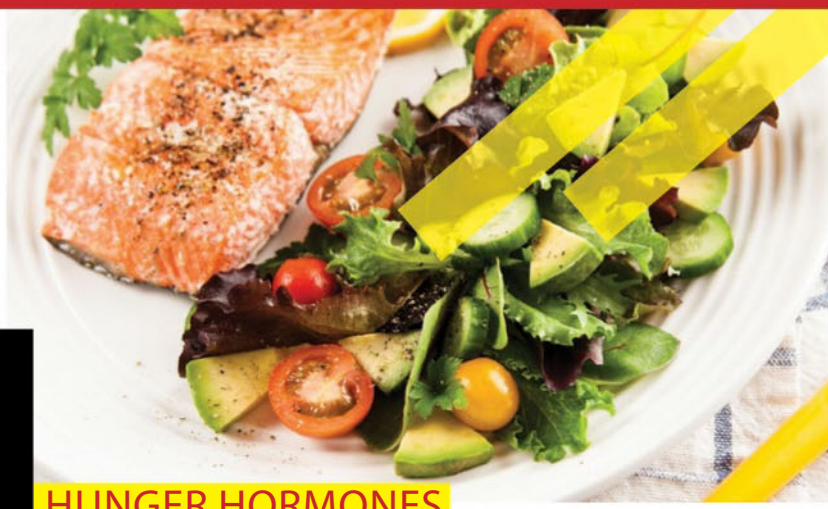
WEIGHT HOMEOSTASIS

At its most basic biological level, your brain interprets the dieting process as a form of starvation. It will therefore initiate processes that place your body in 'survival mode'. Subsequently your metabolism slows and you experience more food cravings. This is a key physiological process in mankind's evolutionary adaptations for survival.

A landmark study published on the Internet Journal of Advanced Nursing Practice in 2013, by Outland et al, looked at "promoting homeostasis (a state of equilibrium or balance) to avoid rebound weight gain in yo-yo dieters".

The study on weight homeostasis uncovered "a host of orexigenic (appetite-stimulating) and anorexigenic (appetite-suppressing) hormones working to keep a stable healthy weight". What this means is that when energy stores, in the form of stored glycogen, body fat and, to a lesser extent, muscle tissue, are depleted through dieting a type of overcompensation effect occurs to replenish them, which is characterised by overeating.

The study also highlighted other compensatory mechanisms that lead to rebound weight, including involuntary responses to hunger that lower metabolism, reduce thyroid hormones, and produce fat cells. This led researchers to state in their paper that "weight homeostasis resists weight loss, not willpower". Researchers explained the concept of weight homeostasis as a process that aims to "err on the side of resisting 'starvation' over the promotion of weight loss ... when calories are withheld to the point of hunger, the body becomes flooded with hunger hormones. The hungry individual is spurred to eat, and thus eats a lot. Eating in response to hunger is a voluntary way to replenish lost energy stores."



HUNGER HORMONES

Our primary hunger-stimulating hormone is ghrelin, which is produced by cells in the gut.

When you restrict food intake or lose excess weight rapidly your body secretes more ghrelin in response to this change in weight homeostasis. In addition, your body also decreases leptin production, the hormone produced by fat cells that signals satiety.

While dieting it is potentially easier to deal with the feeling of persistent hunger, but once you stop the diet you don't expect to still have to deal with these powerful impulses. However, due to the principles of weight homeostasis, our bodies will prioritise processes that prevent starvation and weight loss. To achieve this your body develops a tolerance to appetite-suppressing hormones over time, but we never develop a tolerance to appetite-stimulating hormones. As a result these hormones continue to stimulate feelings of hunger indefinitely.

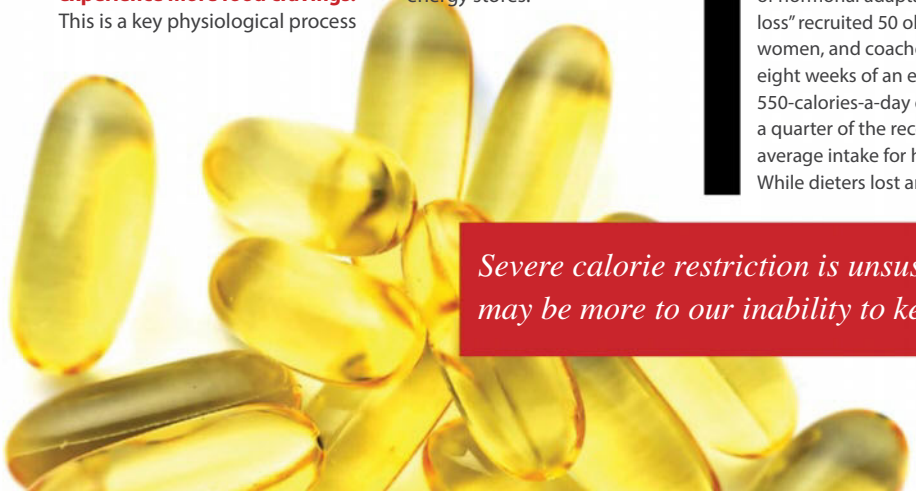
A 2011 study published in the New England Journal of Medicine found that these hormone levels can remain altered for up to 12 months after a diet ends. This chronically altered hormonal state makes it extremely difficult to resist the urge to eat to maintain your post-diet weight and body composition.

The researchers, who were studying the "long-term persistence of hormonal adaptations to weight loss" recruited 50 obese men and women, and coached them through eight weeks of an extreme 500-to-550-calories-a-day diet, which is a quarter of the recommended average intake for healthy women. While dieters lost an average of 30lb (13.6kg) during the study, they regained an average of 11lb (5kg) despite counselling support from researchers. The dieters also reported feeling far hungrier and more preoccupied with food than they did before losing the weight.

The researchers concluded: "One year after initial weight reduction, levels of the circulating mediators of appetite (hormones) that encourage weight regain after diet-induced weight loss do not revert to the levels recorded before weight loss." The participants' ghrelin levels were about 20% higher than at the start of the study, while levels of their appetite-suppressing hormones, leptin and peptide YY, remained unusually and unexpectedly low.

The research paper led by Outland also highlighted the other involuntary mechanisms the body uses to stop any further loss of energy reserves, many of which are mediated by ghrelin. "The complex cascade of homeostatic biochemicals produces fat cells, decreases resting energy metabolism, decreases thermogenesis, and decreases thyroid secretion."

In fact, studies conducted at Columbia University show that the associated metabolic slowdown can mean that to simply maintain a stable weight, people must eat around 400 fewer calories a day after a diet than they did before starting the diet. In addition, muscle biopsy samples taken before and after diet-induced weight loss showed that once a person drops weight, the fibres may change to become more fuel-efficient, burning up to a quarter fewer calories during exercise than those of a person at the same natural weight.



Severe calorie restriction is unsustainable, so there may be more to our inability to keep the weight off.

turn page

A LOSING BATTLE?

All of these processes work together to tell your brain you're hungry and ensure that you don't stop eating until you have regained the lost weight, and then some. That means we're designed in such a way that weight loss is resisted as much as possible, while weight gain isn't easily prevented.

So, as you can see, it's not just your lack of willpower that sabotages your diet-induced results time and time again. However, psychology does seem to play a central role in our ability to keep the lost weight off, although our ability to control willpower may be largely out of our control. Studies show that the brain reacts differently to food after diet-induced weight loss. In 2010 researcher Michael Rosenbaum and his colleague from Columbia University Medical Centre, Joy Hirsch, a neuroscientist, scanned the brains of people before and after weight loss while they looked at a variety of objects, including food. After losing weight, the scans showed a greater response in the areas associated with reward and a lower response in those associated with self-control, which means our willpower is severely affected after dieting.

In addition, a study by scientists at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York, which was published in the journal Cell Metabolism, discovered that when starved of food, brain cells actually consume each other. This causes the release of fats, which in turn results in higher levels of a powerful brain chemical that stimulates appetite.



You need to have a balanced, sustainable approach to eating; *a lifestyle that includes regular exercise, a healthy, balanced diet, and a healthy relationship with food.*

MY CHEMICAL (FOOD) ROMANCE

What these studies show is that our desire to eat, often characterised by ravenous hunger, is chemical. It's something you can't control, but you can prevent it. The first steps you need to take before embarking on any attempt to lose weight is to establish a new way of sustainable, healthy eating, and reprogramme the way you think about food.

Any form of deprivation or restriction is generally unhealthy and is unsustainable. With this approach you'll never be happy, nor will you ever feel satisfied. This in itself has significant psychological implications, before your body's natural response to dieting even kicks in.

There are also a number of practical and medical interventions being proposed to limit or eliminate the weight rebound. For instance, a study published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition showed that participants who ate a high-protein diet and used portion-controlled meal replacements were less likely to experience rebound weight gain. This was attributed to the fact that meals high in protein increased satiety and modestly increased energy expenditure.

Another study, published in the International Journal of Obesity, also found that increasing protein intake by as little as 20% offered weight control benefits. And a study published in Clinical Diabetes also supported the role of a high-protein diet for weight maintenance. According to this study, a low-glycaemic diet that was high in protein, and contained moderate amounts of fat was more successful than a high-glycaemic diet that contained less protein for preventing rebound weight gain.

Another tool currently under investigation is the use of injectable leptin to control hunger, much like diabetics use insulin to manage blood glucose levels. Preliminary studies from Columbia University have found that when dieters are injected with replacement leptin hormones, it's easier for them to maintain or continue weight loss.



INTUITIVE EATING

The other solution being touted by a growing number of experts is making a switch to what has been termed 'intuitive eating', rather than restrictive dieting. This approach aims to promote a return to weight homeostasis, rather than trying to overcome it, as it is theorised that every body has a healthy weight set-point. The fact that appetite-suppressing gut hormones outnumber appetite-stimulating hormones has been offered as evidence to support this theory.

Intuitive eating, at its most basic level, requires that we eat when hungry and stop eating when full. The principles involved include unconditional permission to eat what food is desired when hungry, but adherents to this way of eating should only eat for physical rather than emotional reasons.

Chronic dieters often find it difficult to make this distinction as they have spent their lives trying to tune out hunger signals, instead of tuning in to them. However, responding to internal physiological hunger and satiety cues to determine when and how much to eat can be (re)learnt, according to those who advocate this approach. This is the way to achieve a healthy weight, they believe.

There are now over 25 studies on intuitive eating that show that people who eat this way have a lower body mass index, better cholesterol levels, eat a variety of foods, enjoy eating and have a psychological hardiness. They also exhibit a lower prevalence of eating disorders (Tribole & Resch, 2012).

At the end of the day this teaches us that it's healthy to eat when hungry. The trick is to eat for the right reasons, and eat the right type and amount of food. With this approach your body will, over time, return to a healthy weight. But in that statement lies the crux of the matter. People want to lose weight now. They therefore look to quick fixes like restrictive diets and 'wonder products'. Sadly the end result is always the same with this approach – rebound weight gain. So whatever the reason for this may be, the unequivocal message of this article is that to enjoy lasting health and maintain a healthy weight you need to have a balanced, sustainable approach to eating; a lifestyle that includes regular exercise, a healthy, balanced diet, and healthy relationship with food.

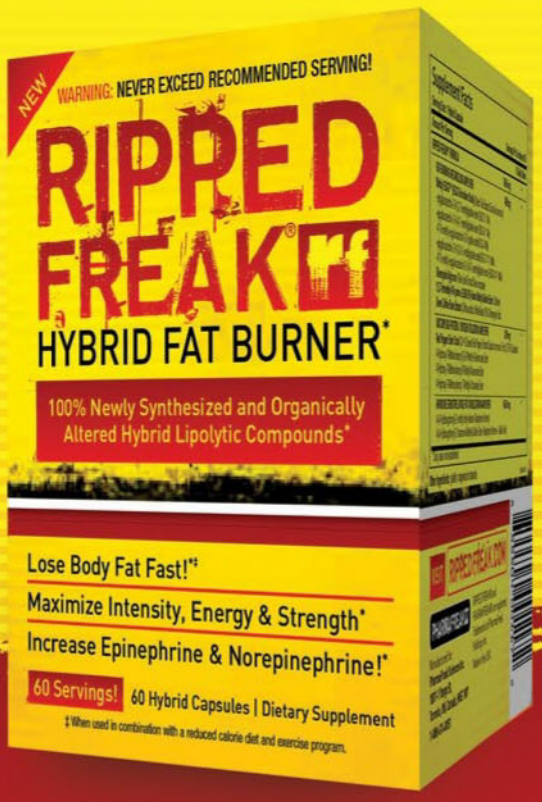
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POST-PREGNANCY SHOCK!

How Genevieve regained her body after two pregnancies, and 47kg of weight gain

"I quickly realised that clean eating is the most important element in a transformation.

I have more energy for my beautiful children, and my marriage has improved dramatically.

After the birth of her second child Genevieve Watling Brand got on the scale and was shocked to see that she weighed 110kg. "My second pregnancy happened during a difficult time in my life as my husband got relocated to Welkom, but I stayed in Johannesburg with my son, who was a year old at the time," she explains. "I dealt with the emotions during that period by eating, which is what led to my weight gain."

However, once her daughter was born Genevieve knew that she had to make a change. "I was depressed and hated myself. I justified the weight gain as part of my pregnancy, but when my daughter Willow was born I realised that I was simply using the pregnancy as an excuse. I knew I needed to lose the weight, both for myself and to be a role model to my children."

To help her achieve the goals she set for herself Genevieve did what many women do in her situation – she entered a transformation challenge. "When I entered the challenge and took 'before' photos I saw how disgusting my body was. It only served to reinforce the notion that I had to make a change. I needed to do it for myself, my children and

my marriage. I was so depressed about my weight that I knew if I didn't make a serious change my marriage could potentially fall apart because when I'm depressed I'm a tough person to deal with."

For assistance she turned to her friend's husband, Haig Kingston. "He has competed in physique competitions before and has always been involved in the fitness industry. After asking him for help he designed a diet and training programme for me. We started off slowly, increasing the intensity and cleaning up my eating as time went by."

Genevieve explains that initially it was tough getting her head around not eating bread at every meal, not drinking coke, and eating small, clean meals throughout the day. "The idea that eating more often resulted in weight loss was a tough one to grasp." But she was soon eating 5–6 small meals a day which consisted of protein and carbs at the first two meals, and then protein and veg for the remaining meals.

"I quickly realised that clean eating is the most important element in a transformation. I have now changed my eating habits completely, and have even got my husband on board. Our fridge now looks like an advert for Fruit & Veg City and we both love it."

She also followed a strict training regimen of cardio in the mornings and weight training in the afternoon. "My weight training split targeted a specific body part each day."

At that point she was taking photos of her physique on a weekly basis so that she could compare them to clearly see the changes in her body. "When these changes became more evident my motivation levels increased further."

As she progressed Genevieve continued to make positive changes to her body, so she decided to hire a coach. "While working with Casey Sudgen of DC Bodies we decided to do the 12-week Supashape Challenge together. She has been amazing along the way."

During her journey Genevieve says that she learnt that discipline, hard work and commitment make anything possible. "If you can dream it, you can do it. I've also learnt that people aren't inspired by what you say, they're inspired by what you do. I therefore want to inspire others who believe this type of transformation isn't possible after two C-sections and serious weight gain during pregnancy." To prove her point she recently started working with a new coach to prepare for her first bikini competition.

"It is a message I really want to share as this process has changed my life. I have more energy for my beautiful children, and my marriage has improved dramatically. My relationships with the important people in my life have also improved because I'm not negative and in the bad space I was in previously. I'm also more confident now, in every aspect of my life, which means my work as an attorney has also improved. It's a powerful feeling that I wish more women could experience."



"I've also learnt that people aren't inspired by what you say, they're inspired by what you do."



Quick facts

Favourite health dish: A breakfast of oats mixed with egg whites, cinnamon and sweetener.

Favourite exercises: Squats and push-ups.

Must-use supplements: My pre-workout, Berserk by Titan Labs, or USN Hyperlean. Whey protein after a workout, and BCAAs and glutamine to assist with muscle recovery.

Top diet tip: Don't give up. If it's hard, it's working.

47kgs LOST

STATS

Age: 28
Occupation: Attorney
Lives: Welkom, Free State
Weight before: 113kg
Body fat before: 42%
Weight after: 66kg
Body fat after: 24%
Marital status: Married with two children

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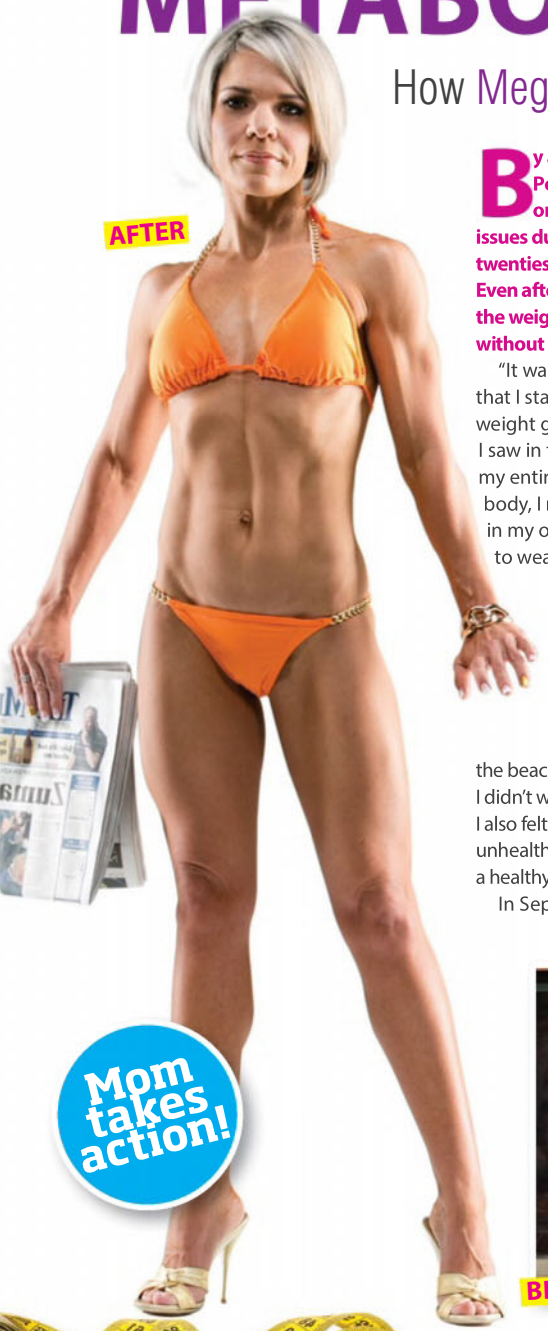
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METABOLISM MELTDOWN

How Megan Poolton stopped age-related weight gain in its tracks



By all accounts Megan Poolton is one of the lucky ones. She never had weight issues during her teens and twenties, and was always petite. Even after both her pregnancies the weight came off quite fast, without the need to diet.

"It was when I hit my thirties that I started to notice some weight gain, and I didn't like what I saw in the mirror. Having spent my entire life content with my body, I now felt uncomfortable in my own skin. I even started to wear baggy clothes to try and hide what was underneath."

Dealing with these unfamiliar emotions and self-consciousness proved to be difficult for Megan. "I didn't even want to go to the beach with my family because I didn't want to be seen in a bikini. I also felt like my life was on an unhealthy path, and I wanted to set a healthy example for my kids."

In September 2013 she decided that it was time to take action. "I decided that it was time to stop with all the excuses, so I started the Supashape 12 Week Challenge. I didn't officially enter, preferring to rather just follow the programme as I had a history of starting but never finishing projects in my life. I also had a fear of failure and didn't want to be seen as such in the eyes of those I care about. I know now that it was my lack of confidence driving that decision."

Megan was also faced with another, somewhat unique challenge. "I had never set foot in the gym nor had I dieted a day in my life. Yet, to my surprise, I completed the challenge. I didn't skip any workouts or any meals, and I soon found myself hooked on this new healthy lifestyle."

Megan was now training with weights 4-5 times a week and doing cardio 2-3 times a week. "I also followed a calorie controlled diet with a cheat meal once a week. At first eating more food, more frequently, and eating the right foods was the most difficult aspect for me, but my cooler box soon became my new accessory."

Unsurprisingly she soon started to see how her body was changing, and she started to like what she saw in the mirror. "At first my goal was just to be fit, healthy and happy, and complete something I'd started. But now I want to take my fitness journey to the next level." She subsequently entered and completed her second Supashape 12-week transformation challenge, under the guidance of coach Andrew Hudson, and is now a finalist.

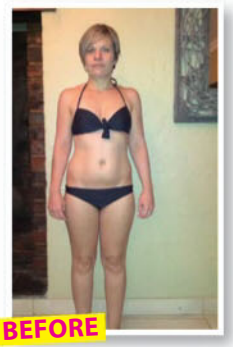
"Andrew put together challenging workouts for me and tailored my diet to what works best for me, and he has achieved amazing results. This has instilled a new-found love for fitness and a healthy lifestyle in me, so much so that I now plan to get up on stage and compete as a bikini athlete. That is what fuels and motivates me to push harder and get through those days when I feel like I can't get through a workout or finish a meal."

And Megan also had extra help and encouragement from her husband (a.k.a. her training partner, inspiration, chef, and best friend). "Without his constant encouragement, motivation and faith in me, I wouldn't be where I am today."

Thanks to this support, and her dedication and hard work Megan could once again relax into life, content with her body and her health. "I also have more faith in myself, and I've realised that if I put my mind to it I can accomplish anything. I have also realised that I can't go back to my old unhealthy ways and expect to look and feel the way I do now."

Having successfully gone through the process Megan has learnt invaluable lessons that can benefit everyone. "Always remember, Rome wasn't built in a day; there is no quick fix or a magic pill. It takes time, hard work, dedication and some sacrifice. There will be days when you want to throw in the towel, and there will be times when you fail and fall off the wagon. Just don't give up. Get up, dust yourself off, and climb back on. Always remember why you started this journey to begin with. I promise you, it will all be worth it in the end."

Mom takes action!



STATS

Weight before: 54kg
Weight after: 45kg
Age: 33
Occupation: Conversion Support
Lives: Durban
Marital status: Married with two amazing sons



Quick facts

Favourite healthy dish: Sushi, or organic peanut butter with whey
Favourite exercises: Lat pulldowns and cable bicep curls
Must-use supplements: Supashape Pure Whey, Thermo Lean and Carnitine Lean
Top diet tip: Fail to prepare, then be prepared to fail.



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POOLTON
Previous Challenge Finalist

TREVOR
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BYE BYE BABY WEIGHT

Larisa De Swardt goes from miracle mom to competitive athlete



PHOTOGRAPHED BY SOULBY JACKSON

While she was trying to conceive a number of factors conspired against Larisa De Swardt and her weight. "We struggled for three years to fall pregnant, and we lost five babies over this period. It was a very hard time for us and, emotionally, I was absolutely devastated."

During that time Larisa wasn't allowed to do any form of exercise, so weight gain was inevitable, especially with all the fertility medication she was taking. "After losing our twins in 2009 I realised that my weight was getting out of hand. I therefore started to eat healthy meals on a more regular basis and stopped drinking all the medication that was prescribed by my gynaecologist."

Despite that, two months later she fell pregnant again. "It was a total surprise as the doctor said we wouldn't be able to conceive again, but that meant more weight gain. I was then shocked into taking drastic action after seeing a photo of myself after my pregnancy."

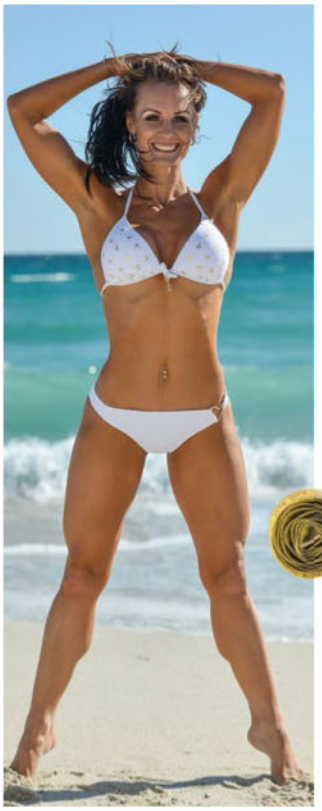
Larisa was referred to IFBB pro bodybuilder, coach and personal trainer, Hennie Kotze by a friend. "I did the 12 week Fitness Maniacs Challenge and lost a lot of weight, and 18% body fat. Then, in January 2013, a very close friend of mine started nagging me to participate in a fitness show with her. I told her she was absolutely crazy because I couldn't see myself standing on a stage in front of an audience, let alone in a bikini."

However, the incessant nagging wore her down and, eventually, 10 weeks before a novice show, she told her trainer that she wanted to compete. "Hennie immediately changed my diet and training programme to achieve the competition physique I required. The ability to change my physique in that way has been the biggest personal accomplishment of this transformation, and I haven't looked back since."

Having realised her dream of becoming a mother – she is now a busy mom caring for three young boys – Larisa has made wholesale changes to her lifestyle. "I now get up at 05h00 to start preparing breakfast for the family and myself. It's chaos in my house until 06h40 as everybody needs to get up and ready for the day. I eventually get to gym by 07h30. I do cardio before weight training, and I'm at the office by 09h30. Afternoons are also hectic as the kids have to be at different places for their sporting activities, but we're all back home by 17h00 or 18h00. I then help with homework and prepare dinner. When everything is settled and the kids are in bed at 20h00 I hit the treadmill or bicycle for my last cardio session of the day."

While it proves challenging at times, Larisa works hard at finding and keeping a balance between gym, work and family. "Thankfully I'm blessed with a wonderful husband who supports me and always tries to make things easier for me. I've also learnt to value time, so I always train and work hard to reach my goals."

Larisa now aims to inspire others following her success, whether it's to better their personal lives, improve their fitness levels or merely establish healthy eating habits. "My ultimate goal, however, is to become a fitness model. I always set high standards for myself and love taking on new challenges as I want to improve all aspects of my career and personal life, and become the best version of me."



She also plans to study nutrition, particularly to help young children who have learning deficiencies like ADD/ADHD, as this has become another passion she's developed thanks to her new lifestyle. "I want to understand the human body, especially that of children, and how our daily food intake can improve learning capabilities. The food kids eat has a huge impact on their brain function, so hopefully I will be able to assist the parents of these children to understand the importance of a healthy, balanced diet."

STATS

Age: 36
Weight before: 82kg
Weight after: 60kg
Body fat before: 28%
Body fat after: 10%
Marital status: Married with three children

"Set yourself a goal and stick to it. Get help from a professional to achieve your goals."

Quick facts:

Favourite supplements: I use a range of Cipla Nutrition products, which include whey powder, Lipo Blast Fat Burner, glutamine, a multivitamin, and vitamin C powder to boost my immune system.

Top nutrition tips: Plan, plan, plan! Always have your food prepared in advance and with you.




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TURNING DREAMS INTO REALITY

How Sandra Joubert used her transformation to revolutionise her life, not just her lifestyle



For many, a body and lifestyle transformation is the destination of a life-long battle with their weight. Once achieved these people settle in to a new, more comfortable healthy lifestyle. For others it's merely the starting point for an entirely new journey in life.

Take Sandra Joubert for instance. After achieving her transformation she began competing as a fitness athlete, achieving a number of notable results on the competitive stage. She then entered the 2012 USN Face of Fitness cover model search competition, and won, and has now made a health and fitness lifestyle her profession as a certified personal trainer working for the country's biggest gym chain.

For Sandra her transformation was the catalyst to fulfilling her life-long dream of becoming a fitness athlete, model and professional. She has taken every opportunity granted to her through her hard work and dedication, and has steamed through every door that her success has opened.

HEALTH HAZARD

While Sandra could never consider herself obese, she was never really happy with her weight and body. She also suffered from various health problems due to her lifestyle. "After I left university I went from a size 10 to a size 16. By mid-2008 I weighed 64.5kg, and much of that weight gain was due to the long hours I was working at an architectural firm, combined with all the work pressure. If I'm honest I wasn't happy with the direction my life was taking either, so I became depressed. This wore away my self-confidence and made me shy. I then began to suffer from a number of health-related issues like stomach ulcers and bad skin."

Initially Sandra dealt with these developments in her life the way most of us do, with denial. "It wasn't until I saw pictures of myself that I became really shocked about my condition. I remember feeling so bad that I didn't want to go out, especially to gym. When I did go to gym I stuck to the cardio equipment in the back and avoided the weight training section altogether because I felt too out of shape to train where everyone could see me."

Sandra then decided to make a change in her life to try to change her situation by going overseas. "It was during this time that I lost some of the weight as I got a personal trainer and started training and eating healthier. I loved the lifestyle so much that I went on to complete a few personal training qualifications, and then started working as a trainer and group exercise instructor. By June 2010 I weighed 56kg and had just 15% body fat."

However, when she returned to South Africa she picked up most of her old habits. "I started studying architecture again and picked up all the lost weight over the course of a year. The real low-point for me happened after a bad break-up. That's when I realised that if I kept doing things in the same way I could never expect a different outcome."

It wasn't until Sandra decided to join her sister, Karen, on a healthy anti-acid diet that she finally found a more sustainable lifestyle approach. "We followed this diet to be healthier, not to get skinnier. That was merely a bonus for us. We knew that if our bodies were healthy and in balance then losing the weight would be easy, and it was." It was also much easier to stick with it based on this goal, as chasing a number on the scale is often the most difficult part of a transformation.

To stay on track Sandra set a number of smaller goals, and started making small changes that were easy to maintain, like cutting out Chutney and Aromat from her diet. This approach meant that she stopped eating almost 50% of the junk food she loved because it didn't taste as good any more. "Every week I aimed to replace something bad with something good. Then I tried to keep my eating during the week healthy and clean, keeping my cheats for weekends. While I fell off the wagon a few times, the next day I'd get up and do better."

Sandra's new lifestyle consisted of 4-5 weight training sessions a week, with 10-15 minutes of high intensity cardio a day as part of a warm-up before every workout. "I followed a split programme, working different muscle groups on different days.

Career move

Sandra graced our cover for the January 2013 issue of *fitness* magazine when she was crowned the USN face of fitness



@Sandra_joubert

Sandra would have 2-3 small snacks between meals to ensure that she was eating every 2-3 hours to keep her metabolism elevated. These snacks would mostly be protein-based like nuts, biltong or a protein shake.



Sandra is a personal trainer at Virgin Active and spends her time helping and motivating others!





DRESSED BY www.boostgymwear.co.za

I did three sets of 12-15 reps at a moderate to heavy weight with the aim of gaining muscle and building a good base to work from."

However, the biggest changes were made to her diet. "It became very apparent to me that my excess weight and poor health were all part of my poor eating habits. My main problem was sugar, so my focus was on following an eating plan that would control my cravings. I did this by eating more regularly to maintain my blood sugar levels, and eating three well-balanced main meals a day. I didn't cut carbs though; I just ate good sources of complex carbs. Breakfast also become a high- protein meal. Lunch and dinner would comprise about half a plate of vegetables, lean meat and either brown rice or sweet potato. I would also have 2-3 small snacks between meals to ensure that I was eating every 2-3 hours to keep my metabolism elevated and my blood sugar levels stable. These snacks would mostly be protein-based like nuts, biltong or a protein shake."

COMPETITIVE SPIRIT

Sandra then started training with a personal trainer again. "Under the guidance of Stiaan Ras we stepped up my training to 5-6 times a week with training sessions of between 60-80 minutes. These sessions mainly consisted of high intensity interval training and bootcamp-style exercise." This change in approach came as Sandra's sister had convinced her to compete for the first time.

"I'd always dreamt of competing in a fitness competition and Stiaan helped me to get my body into the best shape ever. I stepped on stage on 14 April 2012 at the USN Millennium Gold Plate competition and won my division, as well as the Overall Ladies Figure title. It was a dream come true as I weighed 51kg, with just 8.5% body fat. I had also conquered my shyness and lack of self-confidence. This win is what gave me the confidence to chase another dream of mine – becoming a fitness model."

Sandra subsequently entered the 2012 USN Face of ***fitness*** cover model search competition, and was selected as a top six finalist to attend the final photo shoot in Johannesburg. "Making it into the top six was a great achievement in itself, but I was then told that I had made the cover of the January/February 2013 issue of ***fitness*** magazine. I beat over 150 of South Africa's fittest females, and began what has evolved into an ongoing relationship representing South Africa's leading supplement manufacturer, USN as a sponsored athlete and brand ambassador."

After the competition Sandra's career in the health and fitness industry really took off. "My profile was significantly boosted as I appeared in two ***fitness*** magazine features, and my transformation story was published in the magazine. I also appeared in USN marketing material, and was included in a photo shoot with two of USN's most inspiring brand ambassadors – Anna Wood and 2012 Miss South Africa, Marilyn Ramos, which was a real highlight for me as I look up to these ladies. I also participated in a number of USN events, where we offered clients and members of the public advice about healthy living, training and diets. I also organised various public speaking opportunities based on my profile, where I talked about nutrition, health tips and supplementation to diverse groups of ladies."

And instead of hanging up her competition bikini, having proven herself on the competitive stage, Sandra chose to carry on competing and going through all that hard dieting and prep. "I did it to get back into shape after an operation I had in March 2013, and competed in two more shows that year – Ms SA Xtreme and the Boksburg Classic, in the Fitness Bikini division. The feedback I got from friends, family and the general public was amazing. A number of ladies contacted me on Facebook to tell me how I have inspired them, both with my stage appearances and my transformation. That has had a huge impact on my life, both personally and professionally."

THE NEXT STAGE

Sandra has subsequently moved to Johannesburg, and has started working full-time as a personal trainer at Virgin Active Victory Park. "I'm loving every second of it as Victory Park Virgin Active is an amazing up-beat club with a very friendly and vibrant atmosphere."

And the fact that she has maintained her health and fitness levels also means that Sandra is able to take on many new challenges. "I recently started trail running, with the aim of building up to half marathon distance races in the near future. Trail running is certainly soul food for me, and the more I do it the more I love it. It's great to set a new challenge and work towards bettering your own fitness and training ability. It's also good to mix things up a bit and keep your training interesting and challenging. The aim is to always keep moving forward and only look back to see how far you've come."

Sandra's transformation story spans some six years but, as Sandra explains, it's a never-ending process. "Over this time I have lost over 10kg, dropped over 14% body fat, gained muscle and changed my body shape. I've also conquered many fears, achieved my dreams and done more than I ever thought was possible, and I've become a new person in the process."

She admits it wasn't easy, but the challenges were necessary to reach this point. "I often felt like giving up, but I now feel that there is nothing holding me back. My journey has only made me stronger and I've learnt so much about myself in the process. Hopefully I can now help a few more people achieve the same results by supporting them through their journey."

SANDRA'S TOP TRANSFORMATION TIPS:

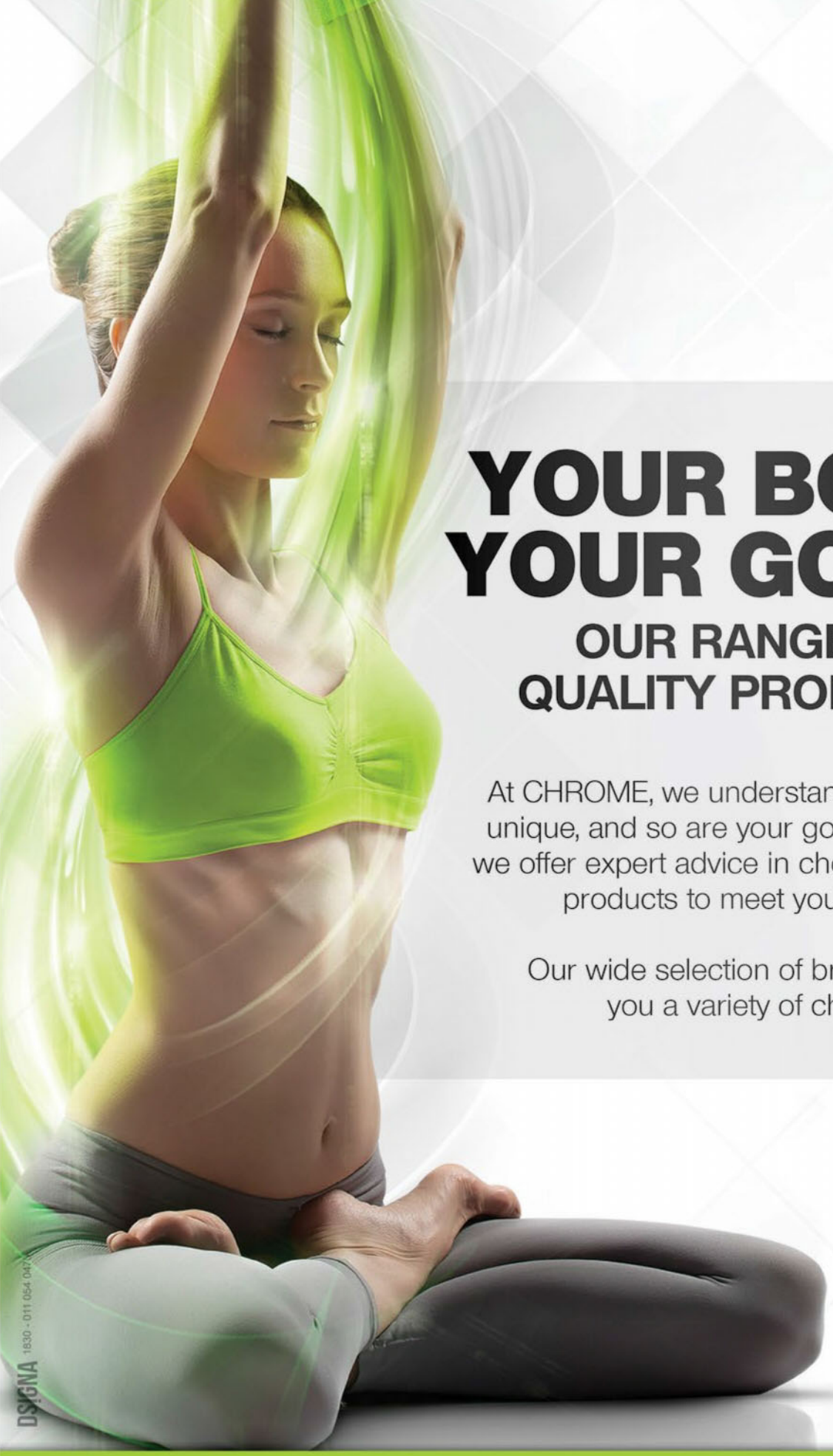
- Don't think quick fixes. Think lasting results and maintaining a healthy lifestyle.
- If you're making small changes that are easy to maintain you'll see big results.
- Aim to maintain a healthy balance. When your body is healthy and your mind is in a good place, things will naturally fall into place.

COMPETITIVE ACHIEVEMENTS

- **2012 USN Millennium Gold Plate –** Overall winner Ladies Figure
- **2012 USN Millennium Gold Plate –** 1st Ladies Classic Performance Figure
- **2012 BBSA/IFBB Gauteng North Open and Novice show –** 2nd Ladies Body Fitness
- **2012 Miss SA Xtreme –** 3rd Body Fitness under 163cm
- **2012 H&H Classic –** 2nd Fitness Bikini
- **2012 IFBB Gauteng North Provincials –** 4th Fitness Bikini
- **2013 Boksburg Classic –** 4th Fitness Bikini
- **2013 Miss SA Xtreme –** 6th Body Fitness under 163cm

STATS:

Weight before: 64,5kg
Body fat % before: 24%
Weight after: 53kg
Body fat % after: 10%
Age: 30
Career: Personal trainer
Favourite health food dish: Roasted vegetable omelette or steak, sweet potato and roasted oven vegetables.
Favourite exercises: Plyometric split jump lunges, squat jumps, high step-ups and walking lunges.



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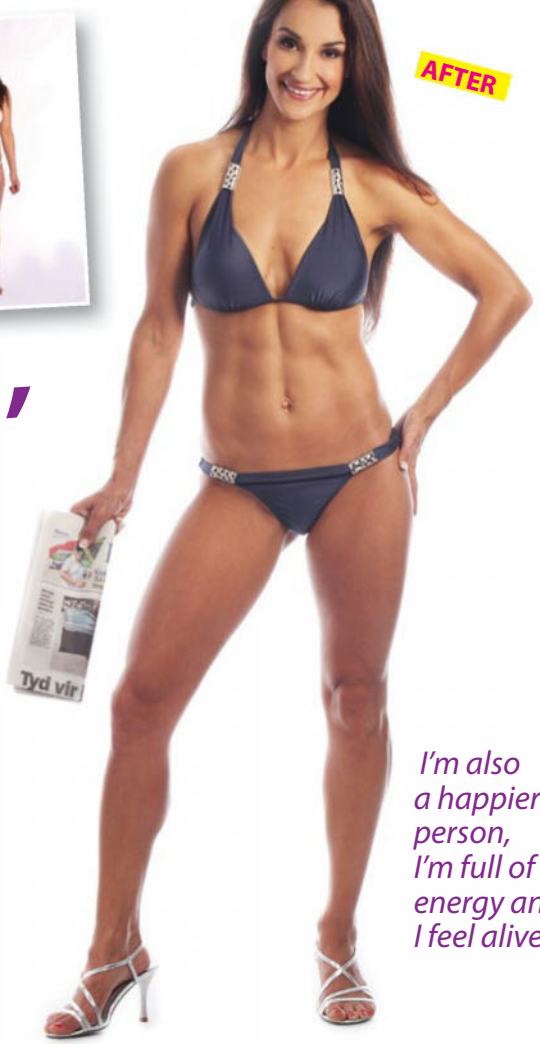
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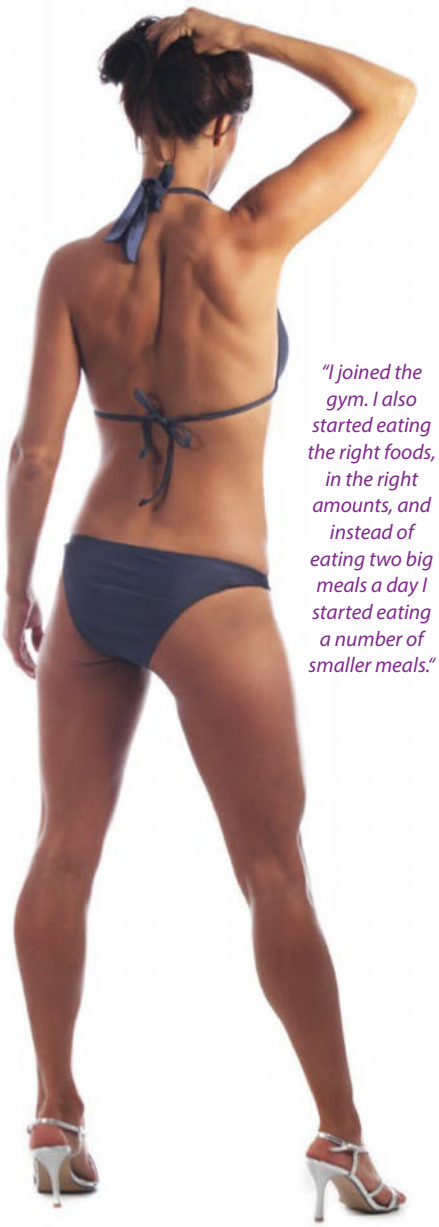
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'12 WEEKS TO A BETTER VERSION OF ME'

When Lisl Windt was no longer able to fit into her clothing she knew the time had come to do something about her steady weight gain.





"I joined the gym. I also started eating the right foods, in the right amounts, and instead of eating two big meals a day I started eating a number of smaller meals."

"I refused to buy bigger clothing as it meant that I had to acknowledge that I was getting bigger, so when my clothing would no longer fit me I became miserable and depressed," she explains.

Lisl went online to look for a solution to her weight problem, which is when she discovered the 12-week USN Body Makeover Challenge. "Armed with the comprehensive Body Makeover Guide from the USN starter pack I joined the gym. I also started eating the right foods, in the right amounts, and instead of eating two big meals a day I started eating a number of smaller meals. I also used the comprehensive range of USN supplements from the weight control stack provided in the starter pack."

Despite the step-by-step guidelines in the Body Makeover Guide Lisl soon realised that she needed some additional help to achieve her goals. "After a month of training I felt that I couldn't do it all by myself, so I asked one of the personal trainers at the gym to help me."

Riaan Koekemoer proved to be invaluable to her ultimate success as he was able to make specific changes to her training programme that were better suited to Lisl's body and genetics. "I definitely couldn't have done it without Riaan's help. He really made a world of a difference to my transformation journey."

Driven by her desire to fit back into her clothing again Lisl worked hard in the gym every day after work. "That proved to be the biggest challenge for me as that was time I usually spent with my son. However, I was prepared to make certain sacrifices to ensure I looked better than ever before."

Lisl also battled with cutting out all the sweet stuff, and eating cleanly, but she is extremely grateful that she stuck with it. "The whole USN Body Makeover Challenge process has given me lots of confidence, which is something I didn't have prior to completing the challenge. I'm also a happier person, I'm full of energy and I feel alive. I now know that anything is possible, and that if you can dream it, you can achieve it, as long as you remain strong and stay motivated."

I'm also a happier person, I'm full of energy and I feel alive.



Quick facts
Favourite healthy dish: Tuna with rye bread or grilled chicken and steamed vegetables
Favourite form of training: Resistance training
Must-use supplements: USN Phedra-Cut Hardcore and USN CLA Pure 1000
Top diet tip: Drink lots of water: it really makes a huge difference, and cut out all sugar

STATS
Age: 37
Occupation: Photographer
Lives: Mossel Bay
Weight before: 61.7kg
Weight after: 53.3kg
Body fat lost: 8.4%



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'TRAPPED INSIDE A BODY THAT I DON'T BELONG IN'

When Lee-Anne Zylstra nearly broke a limb trying to show her daughter how to do a cartwheel in the garden she knew she had a problem with her weight.

"My inability to do something I used to find easy made me stop and take a long look at myself," she remembers.

Despite having had two children Lee-Anne knew that there was no reason, or excuse, to have let herself go to that extent and gain all that weight. "I had the knowledge and facilities, and the opportunities to avoid this situation, which made me feel ashamed of myself."

This realisation was further cemented in Lee-Anne's mind when she saw photos of herself at a wedding, an event where she had felt particularly good about herself. "More importantly though, I came to realise that my outward appearance no longer expressed who I am on the inside. I desperately wanted to be able to express the real me and be the person I wanted to be, both inside and out. I therefore felt trapped inside a body that I didn't belong in."

That's when she decided to follow the 12-week USN Body Makeover Challenge. "I had already lost 10kg, albeit slowly, when I decided to push it up a notch by doing the 12-week USN challenge.

The plan provided had me training five days a week, with a combination of weights and cardio, while following a structured eating plan that consisted of a low-carb, higher protein diet. I also had a free meal once a week."

Lee-Anne soon realised that changing her diet would be the biggest challenge to her lifestyle makeover. "I had to start eating much smaller portions, while also cutting out refined carbs and sugar. But I soon became more mindful of what I ate, and no longer ate just anything when I wanted to."

She also faced numerous other challenges along the way. "It's definitely a long road with lots of obstacles and setbacks. Initially it was really hard for me as a mother to get over the guilt I felt about taking time out for me. I distinctly remember the first time I went to gym during bath time. I felt terrible having left my husband to deal with it on his own, but I soon realised that a healthier, happier mom was better than an unhealthy, unhappy one."

She also realised that she needed to learn how to be patient with herself. "It is important to not beat yourself up for 'falling off the wagon'. Rather focus on getting back on track and making healthier choices in future. That required patience, which is what ultimately got me to reach my goals. Nobody can be perfect all of the time, but constantly striving to be better is what will make the difference in the long run."

From a more practical perspective, Lee-Anne says that learning to be prepared is an essential skill needed to be successful in any transformation or makeover. "It's a major contributing factor to your success. If you aren't prepared it's easy to give in to temptation. Little things, like learning how to prepare and store meals, can make a big difference in our already busy lives."

Having overcome all of these obstacles and challenges Lee-Anne is now "a fitter, healthier and more energetic version of my previous self. I'm also more focused on what I want out of life. The confidence I've gained back has given me the power to do things like complete a personal training course or run a 10km race for fun. I now have a can-do attitude and no longer doubt myself."

But Lee-Anne is quick to point out that her success is not just her own doing. Providing essential assistance and support during her transformation was her coach, IFBB athlete Marcelle Collison. "She is not only my guide, but she is also my inspiration. In fact, we're now working towards my next goal of stepping on the competitive stage in March 2015." Lee-Anne adds that her husband has also been a great support, especially as he never complained about her crazy gym hours or funny meals. "I also have supportive friends who believed in me from the start."

Having gone through the process and achieved success, where many others fail, Lee-Anne can now say with confidence that starting is the hardest part. "Once you get through day one celebrate that achievement, then focus on day two. Eventually you're through week one, and then week two. Just remember, setbacks will happen, but you're still better off than you were on day one. So just keep going and remember to celebrate the small successes on your way to achieving your bigger goal!



Quick facts

Favourite healthy dish: Baked apples with cinnamon and coconut oil, with ½ a cup of plain yoghurt on top

Favourite training routine: I love to train shoulders. Shoulder presses or globe raises are my favourite moves.

Must-use supplement: L-glutamine

Top diet tip: Preparation is key. Don't give yourself a reason to cheat!

STATS

Age: 34
Occupation: Office manager
Lives: Randburg, Johannesburg
Weight before: 60kg
Body fat before: 29.9%
Weight after: 49kg
Body fat after: 18%
Marital status: Married with 2 children



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FROM BABY BUMP TO BIKINI BODY

Bikini athlete, Melissa Jooste makes her comeback after losing the pregnancy weight.





As a seasoned bikini athlete Melissa Jooste wasn't used to dealing with excess weight and fat. While the weight gain was justifiable given the fact that she was pregnant with her first child, Melissa still felt uncomfortable in her own skin.

"It was mid-summer in Durban and I was covered up because I didn't want anyone to see me. I was depressed because I had always been in shape, but I wasn't any more. Going to the gym was also pure torture because of this, and who wants to live their lives behind closed doors in fear that someone will see you and pass judgement? I knew I had no one else to blame but myself, so only I could make the necessary changes. That's when I decided to take control."

Having recently become a mom Melissa says she didn't want to get stuck in the new-mommy rut of "I'll get my body back next year". "I wanted to be able to run around and keep up with a one-year-old and not let my weight hold me back from doing things with my daughter."

Melissa's good friend Carole Van Biljon, who was featured in a previous issue of this magazine for her transformation, signed both of them up for the 12-week Supashape Online Challenge. "At that stage my daughter Emily was just 10 days old, but as I had given natural birth I was able to start exercising almost immediately. After checking with my OB/GYN I started the 12-week journey with Carole. Every day we pushed each other, and every day I got a little bit closer to my goal. It was exactly the motivation I needed to get my butt off the couch and do something for me."

Carole and Melissa were doing a combination of weight training and high-intensity cardio six days a week, and combined this with a sensible eating plan and supplement regimen. "With regard to my diet, I generally follow a very easy eating plan. I have 5-6 small meals a day, and I supplement with Supashape products, and take all my required vitamins daily."

However, it was the eating habits that Melissa picked up during her pregnancy that were the hardest to change. "My outlook on food changed during this time, and by the time Emily was born my relationship with food was at its worst. I had to teach myself that food wasn't the enemy and that I could still enjoy the little pleasures and get results. I just had to decide what was more important to me – eating the entire packet of biscuits or walking on the beach feeling comfortable and confident in my bikini?"

Finding balance between being a new mom and focusing on herself was another area that Melissa had to work on. "A baby consumes your life and you tend to forget that your needs are also important. There were stretches, days or even weeks, when I didn't make it to the gym, but I never gave up on me."

Melissa adds that if it wasn't for the additional support she got from her husband she wouldn't have gotten her health and fitness back on track. "Taking care of a baby is a team effort, especially for first-time parents. And he is always truthful with me and constantly pushes me beyond my limits



"I just had to decide what was more important to me – eating the entire packet of biscuits or walking on the beach feeling comfortable and confident in my bikini?"

because he knows what I'm capable of."

After completing the 12-week Supashape Online Challenge Melissa lost a further 7kg, and subsequently started her preparations to compete as a bikini athlete again. "In the past I started my contest prep at 65kg, but when I started this year I weighed 58kg. My new goal is to therefore be ready 3-4 weeks out, and not have the stress of chasing my tail to get ready to step on stage again."

The experience also instilled a new way of thinking in Melissa, particularly in terms of her contest mindset. "I now look at things very differently than I used to. I used to count every calorie, and would wake and go to bed thinking about what I ate or was going to eat. This is not uncommon among competitive athletes in the fitness industry, because if you're even slightly off your conditioning then most consider themselves fat. However, my experience this year has taught me to think about my health first, and I now strive to achieve a level of conditioning where I still feel good. At the end of the day this is who I am and a number on a scale shouldn't define me."

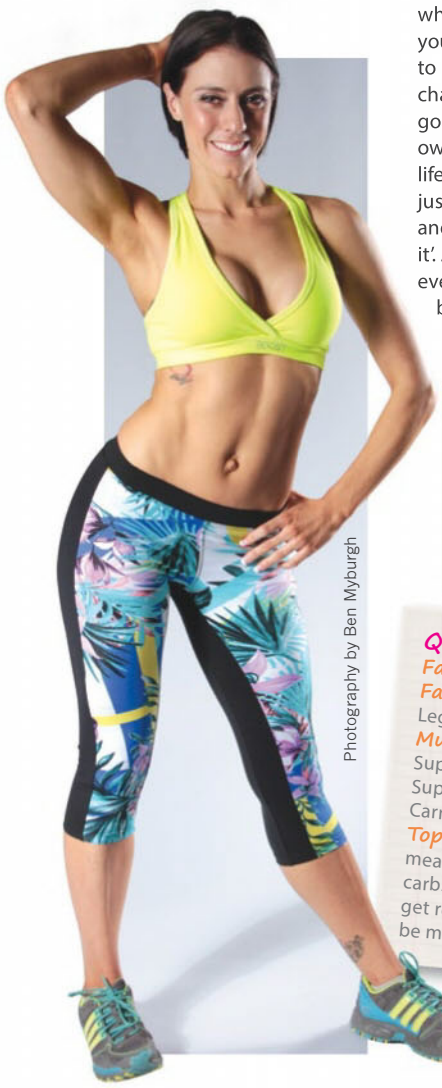
Since making these changes to her mindset and lifestyle Melissa says that she has learnt to love her body again. "I no longer worry about what other people think of me and how I look, because I feel healthy and energetic, and I'm finally happy in my own skin again. I am also a lot less critical of myself and others as I can now relate to people who have struggled with weight loss."

And for someone with so much experience with competition prep she has also learnt some new, invaluable lessons. "There is no quick fix. You have to wake up, decide what you want, determine what it is going to take to get you there, and then you need to maintain that hunger to change until you reach your goal. Everyone is fighting their own battles, whether it's cancer, life stress or emotions, but you just need to stop, take a breath and say to yourself 'I am worth it'. And you need to repeat that every day as you try to get back on track and make your health a priority."



Melissa also believes that many people think it's too expensive to eat healthfully and make the lifestyle changes required to transform your body and life. "It might well be, but how can you put a price tag on your health and wellbeing, and that of your family?"

The other trick to a successful transformation, according to Melissa, is to surround yourself with positive people who lift you up, not break you down. "I have the biggest support group in the form of my friends, family and sponsor, who are all uplifting and motivating. My sponsor Supashape never gave up on me, which has allowed me to transform into the woman I am today. With this type of support everyone can achieve anything they set their mind to. Changing your life isn't easy, and it's one heck of a ride, but once you reach your goal you'll feel like you're standing on top of a mountain."



Photography by Ben Myburgh

ACHIEVEMENTS

- 2008 Fame – Bikini 2nd place
- 2010 IFBB East Coast Classic – Bikini 2nd place
- 2010 IFBB KZN Championships – Bikini 1st place
- 2010 IFBB SA Championships – Bikini 6th place
- 2011 IFBB Muscle Evolution Grand Prix – Bikini 4th place
- 2011 IFBB Samson Classic - Bikini 2nd place

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Quick facts

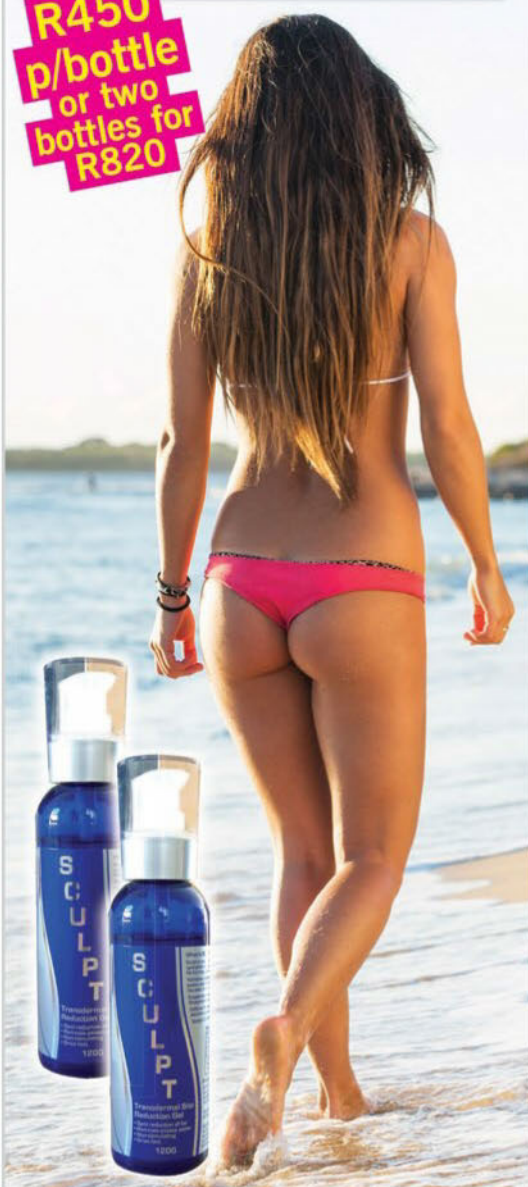
Favourite healthy dish: Sushi
Favourite training routine: Leg day as I love squats
Must-use supplements: Supashape Multivit Pack, Supashape Pure Whey, Supashape Carnitine, SSN CLA, SSN ZMA
Top diet tip: Consume 5-6 small meals a day, don't cut out all carbs, and, always remember, to get results calories burnt need to be more than calories consumed

STATS

Weight before: 75kg
Weight after: 58kg
Age: 30
Occupation: Marketing Assistant
Lives: Durban
Marital status: Married with a baby girl

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IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO START

Teresa Drake is what many might call a late bloomer – she only started her transformation journey at the age of 37.





However, her age hasn't hindered her success in any way. "By being consistent in what I'm doing my body continues to grow 'younger', and it's still changing. In fact, at the age of 40 my body is better than what it was at the age of 18. I can therefore say with confidence that it is never too late to start."

Teresa's desire to conquer the ongoing battle she has had with her weight and appearance, and find inner joy and happiness, started when she became fed up with mainstream media and the unrealistic image of the female form it portrayed.

"I grew tired of all the adverts that featured these beautiful bodies of women who have never struggled with weight problems. In the same vein, I grew tired of personal trainers who offered advice, but had no idea what it felt like to be so unfit and overweight themselves. Reading self-help books that advise readers to 'make peace with your body' or 'learn to love your body' only served to infuriate me even further, particularly as I felt like everything in my life was so out of control. I was overweight and was plagued with medical issues such as a hernia and a spastic colon, and I struggled with PMS for 10 days every month, which meant I would devour just about anything I could get my hands on."

The combination of these factors led to Teresa's weight gain, which saw her tip the scales at over 120kg. "I was so unhappy, fat and uncomfortable that I was ashamed to show my face in public. When I did go to the beach or into town I would cover myself completely with coats or oversized clothing."

She recalls that she was constantly in tears due to the disgust she felt when she saw her image in the mirror. Then, one day, while looking at the mirror through teary eyes, Teresa said a prayer. That's when she came to the realisation that her worth wasn't determined by the size of her body.

THE TURNING POINT

She set out to determine what her body needs to be healthy, and seek the truth about how our bodies really function. "I soon discovered the amazing 'secrets' of fresh fruits and vegetables. The closer to fresh and natural my food, the better it was for me and my family. And then I stumbled on the biggest 'secret' of them all, how modern eating practices, driven by commercial interests, have increased our portion sizes."

Armed with this new-found knowledge Teresa committed to her second 12-week USN Body Makeover Challenge. "I had attempted it once before, over six years ago, but back then I expected USN products to work miracles for me – to help me lose weight by simply popping a few Phedra-Cuts and CLAs. However, on my journey to seek greater wisdom I learnt that that wasn't the case, and began to understand more about the role of supplements in a comprehensive transformation plan."

During her second attempt at the challenge Teresa says she learnt that USN supplements would strengthen, feed and fuel her body to give her the energy and strength she needed to get through her workouts, and remodel her body.

"The combination of the Phedra-Cut, CLA, Diet Fuel Shake, Protein and Whey shakes in the starter pack really work wonderfully while you're doing the challenge and are working strictly according to the

"I knew then that I needed to take control by making a few educated choices, which is when my quest for knowledge began."

USN plan. The protein and whey supplements really made a big difference to me as I don't eat enough protein because I'm not a meat lover and I'm not fond of dairy products and eggs. So when protein comes in this easy and delicious form, you have no excuse to not get enough of it. The BCAA Amino-Lean gave me more endurance and mental clarity during workouts, and also helped with recovery."

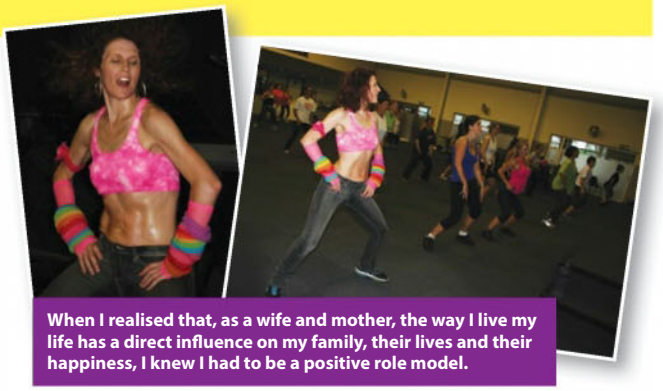
Having successfully used supplements to reach her goal, Teresa says that she now knows that there is no such thing as a quick fix. "Either you change your mindset and change your lifestyle, or you need to make peace with the body you have as it will never change."

However, according to Teresa, making that lifestyle change wasn't easy. "Managing my time to fit an extra hour of training into my already busy day was a major challenge. Eventually I solved this problem by waking up an hour earlier on those really busy days, to make sure I was able to get my weight training session in."

TAKING CHARGE

Another challenge she faced was working through the times when progress slowed, but the fact that she was doing this for her own good – for her health and not just her weight – pulled her through the tough days. "It is no longer just about the number on the scale for me. I've come to realise that if I want to grow old in a healthy body I have to take responsibility for my health and fitness now. There are many temptations and niceties in life that we all want to indulge in, but ultimately you have to take charge of your life and accept the consequences of your choices. You can choose to give in to impulses for that moment of pleasure, but then you'll have to return to a life of unhappiness due to your weight or poor health. If you choose to forgo the unhealthy treats I promise that the rewards of health and a better body are far greater and last a lot longer."

Teresa adds that the benefits of her new lifestyle also impacted more than just herself. "The greatest reward was the change I saw in my children, and my husband, who did the challenge with me, as well as the amazing change I now see, and continue to live with in my marriage. And making them part of the experience also showed them that they can complete whatever challenge they start."



When I realised that, as a wife and mother, the way I live my life has a direct influence on my family, their lives and their happiness, I knew I had to be a positive role model.

Teresa also says that her husband has much more respect for her now that she has taken control of her life, and her body. "Having my husband do it with me also helped me through those early morning workout sessions. Working out with him, especially the weight training sessions, helped a lot. It's natural to have those days when you really feel like skipping a workout, so having someone like your husband on your side to motivate you and push you through is priceless."

SUPPORT

Teresa says that he also makes a great wingman at social gatherings, as they now take their own food because eating healthy and staying fit is now an integral part of their lives. "It's so much easier when you make these changes as a family, and when you see and feel the benefits as a family."

It is now more than three years since Teresa began her transformation journey, and it still continues to add value to her life. "Taking on really challenging things like the USN Body Makeover Challenge not only changes your body, it also gives you confidence, strength and a sense of pride and belonging. It breaks down weakness and makes you stand up for yourself and what you believe in."

And the process has opened her eyes to many of the myths out there that lead others in similar positions astray. "If you're willing to learn from the experts like USN when it comes to making the right choices, and you stick to your exercise routine, you'll achieve and maintain your new body. Remember, changing your body and your health is not a short term or temporary process. Similarly, taking more than the prescribed supplement dosage certainly won't accelerate your results. These products also do not give you a free pass to eat whatever you want."

LEARNING

As her parting thoughts, Teresa says: "There is always something new to learn. The moment you think you've arrived is when you set yourself up for failure. And if you want to improve your health don't run to your doctor, rather see someone who understands nutrition. I did, and I feel great. Lastly, remember that every day is a new opportunity to fix mistakes and build a better future, and a better life. **The only question is: How badly do you want it, and what are you willing to do to get it?"**

Quick facts

Favourite healthy dish: Spinach, avo and chicken fillet salad.

Favourite exercise: Zumba, Zumba, Zumba.

Top diet tip: When you are tempted to eat something unhealthy decide to wait one hour... if you can stay strong and focused for one hour you can stay strong the next hour as well. And then of course balance and portion control.

STATS

64kgs LOST

Weight before: 128kg
Weight after: 64kg
Age: 41
Occupation: Zumba Instructor and Weight loss Counsellor
Lives: Port Elizabeth
Marital status: Married for 11 years.

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A BIG FAT SURPRISE!

Sharon kicked the carbs on her way to a better life!

As a physically active teen and young adult Sharon van Wyk never struggled with her weight. However, after getting married in her mid-twenties she developed what she calls an "unhealthy relationship with food" as she was desperately unhappy.

After years spent unhappily married she eventually divorced. She then remarried, but struggled with infertility issues and recurrent miscarriages. "My weight also ballooned. I went from a healthy 70kg to 118kg in less than a decade, which I blame on dealing with my emotions with food and being physically inactive."

This merely perpetuated more unhealthy emotions. "I hated being the 'fat chick'. I hated not being able to shop in regular clothing stores and battling to find clothes that I liked that fitted me. I hated how sluggish I was and how lazy being so overweight had made me. I was also worried about the impact of my weight and health on my life expectancy as we'd adopted two children and I wanted to live to a ripe old age and watch my daughters grow up."



THE TIPPING POINT

It was when Sharon tipped the scales at 118kg that she was shocked into action. "It was the final push I needed to get going. I had developed high blood pressure and was diagnosed with insulin resistance, so I knew I was on a downward spiral to type 2 diabetes."

Taking a pragmatic approach to her transformation Sharon, her husband and their two best friends set up a challenge among themselves. "We each committed to paying R200 a month into a kitty and at the end of the year the person who was closest to their ideal body mass index (BMI) would win the money. I'm highly competitive and that's all it took to get me started."

Sharon chose to follow a low-carb high-fat (LCHF) diet as one of her friends, who was also involved in the challenge, had already lost 24kg following that approach to eating. "I kept my carb intake below 25g per day, most of which came from veggies like cauliflower. I cut out bread, potatoes, pasta and other high-carb veggies like butternut and carrots. I also eliminated all sugar from my diet."

Sharon admits that cutting the sugar was the hardest part



I have benefitted in other areas of my life. It's totally changed my sense of self belief. I now know that I can do anything I set my mind to, and my confidence is also back.

"I kept my carb intake below 25g per day, most of which came from veggies like cauliflower. I cut out bread, potatoes, pasta and other high-carb veggies like butternut and carrots."



Sharon with husband Walter, fitting into her pj pants together after losing all the weight. Walter has lost 31kg to date.









Sharon completed her first half-marathon (21km) on 2nd November 2014. "This was the toughest physical challenge of my life! I cried when I crossed the finish line due to the pain and relief of having done it". Her official time was 3:00:18. Her next challenge... Two Oceans 21.1km.

of her transformation. "It was far harder than cutting the carbs. I can honestly say that I was hopelessly addicted to sugar. For the first few weeks of the diet I really felt unwell as I worked through my sugar cravings and my body adapted from burning carbs to burning fat for fuel."

MAKING A RUN FOR IT

However, with that approach Sharon was able to lose 15kg without using any form of exercise. "Only once I had lost that weight did I start training because my joints hurt and I was also afraid that I would suffer a heart attack due to my weight." She then started running, and worked her way up to six 5km runs a week, with the aim of running her first 21km race at the end of 2014.

"This is a huge achievement for me as I always used to joke with my friends that if they ever saw me running, they better run too because something must be chasing me. But all jokes aside, losing the weight and having the ability to move in this way has rekindled my love for physical activity, which has had so many positive knock-on effects in my life."

To help her plan her running programme Sharon downloaded the Nike+ running app, which has a coaching function. "The app helps me work out the best way for me to increase my training volume and improve my running training. I also use apps like Monitor My Weight, which monitors my BMI and calorie intake, and I get loads of support from online LCHF groups."

But the most important form of support in this process for Sharon definitely doesn't come from technology. "The support from my friends and husband has helped me the most, especially during the times when my weight loss plateaued. There were weeks at a time when, no matter how hard I tried, my weight would not come down. That was really tough, especially trying to keep motivated and keep going when it felt like nothing was happening."

However, Sharon got through these challenges thanks to her willpower and support structures. "While I've lost a large portion of the weight I'm still busy with the process as I have another 12kg to reach my goal weight (at the time of writing). But I have also benefited in other areas of my life. It's totally changed my sense of self belief. I now know that I can do anything I set my mind to, and my confidence is also back. It's increased my motivation for life in general, tenfold, and my health has definitely improved. My insulin resistance is now under control and my blood pressure has normalised at 120/70. I also have much more energy and my insomnia, which I've struggled with for more than a decade, has all but gone."

Sharon has now been following a LCHF diet for more than nine months and she says it's become a way of life. "After years of attempts and failures I have finally found the right eating plan for me. I now realise that there is no 'one size fits all' approach. I'm living proof of that, and that anyone can do it. Having said that, I can also say with confidence that it's true what they say… nothing tastes as good as thin feels."



Quick facts

Favourite healthy meal: Steak served on a bed of tomato and basil salsa with horseradish crème fraiche or Brussels sprouts sautéed in butter served with dollops of sour cream.

Favourite training routine: Park runs and Zoo trots have become my two favourite weekend activities.

Top diet tip: LCHF totally flies in the face of what traditional dietary guidelines have taught us. I've learned to listen to my body, to only eat when I'm hungry and always focus on keeping protein portions moderate, and increase my fat intake while watching for hidden sugars and carbs in various foods. So research, research and research, and learn to read food labels.

STATS

32kgs LOST

Age: 42
Occupation: National Account Manager
Lives: Boskruin, Johannesburg
Weight before: 118kg
Current weight: 86kg
Marital status: Married with two children

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FUNCTIONAL MOVEMENTS HELP BURN MORE CALORIES & BUILD A STRONGER BODY

FULL BODY FUNCTIONAL



PHOTOGRAPHY BY James Patrick | MODEL: Brooke Stacey

Functional training programmes don't generally isolate muscle groups with specific exercises. Functional exercises tend to be multi-joint exercises that incorporate multiple muscles. This means they can deliver a weight and fat loss benefit as they burn more calories than single joint lifts.



LOVE YOUR BODY

HAVING CONFIDENCE AND A POSITIVE OUTLOOK ON YOUR HEALTH IS THE BEST AND MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO STAY MOTIVATED

BROOKE STACEY...

BrookeStaceyFit **brookestaceyfit** **or online at: www.brookestacey.com**

Brooke Stacey is a fitness model currently living in Austin, Texas. Four years ago she made a commitment to change and, with a personal trainer's help, she was able to re-prioritise and redefine what health and fitness meant in her life. Through consistent weight training, clean eating and a variety of cardio training she was able to transform her physique and life.

FUNCTIONAL EXERCISES MIMICK EVERYDAY MOVEMENTS OF LIFE





DUMBBELL SQUAT, CURL AND PRESS

A The Squat: Holding dumbbells in both hands, stand with your feet shoulder-width apart. Bend your knees and lower your hips down into a squat, until your thighs are parallel to the floor, weights at either side.

B The Curl: Push your body upwards. As you do this, perform the bicep curl by rotating your palms to face upwards and pulling the weight towards your chest.

C The Press: From the finished bicep curl position, turn your palms to face away from you while extending your arms upwards and pressing the dumbbells overhead.



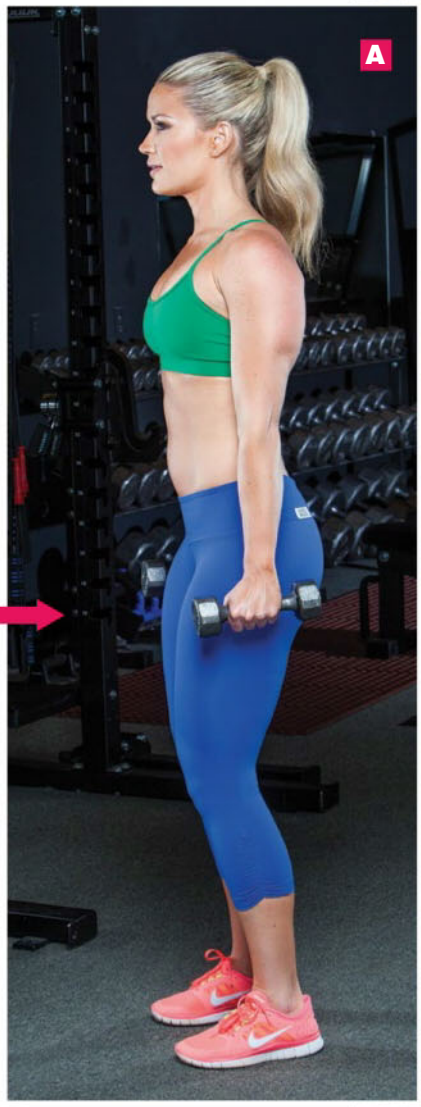
FAT LOSS FACT

DON'T SKIP MEALS

Skipping with a rope is a great way to get your body fired up. Skipping meals isn't. While you may think that skipping lunch, or lunch and supper, may have a long-term positive effect on your weight loss, the truth is that it will have the opposite effect. When your brain thinks that it needs to deal with famine it sends signals to the body to go into fat-storing mode; to stock up for the tough times ahead. What this means is that if you do this often enough, and in an uncontrolled fasting manner, when you do eat it is likely to go straight from the fork onto your hips.

Besides this, eating more regularly is beneficial for keeping your insulin levels from spiking and dipping erratically, which has a negative effect on your metabolism because of insulin's effects on processing sugar and driving glycogen into skeletal muscles and the liver.

"you're not going to get the butt you want by sitting on it!"



TRANSVERSE LUNGE TO OVERHEAD PRESS

Facing forward, grasp dumbbells in both hands. Step back into a transverse lunge (stepping back at an angle, not directly back or to the side), whilst pressing both dumbbells up and overhead.

Form tip: *This is one fluid movement, with the press and the lunge performed at the same time.*



WHAT IS A TRANSVERSE LUNGE?

WHAT DISTINGUISHES THE TRANSVERSE LUNGE FROM A REGULAR LUNGE IS THE ADDED CHALLENGE OF MOVING THROUGH THE TRANSVERSE PLANE BY ROTATING AROUND YOUR STANDING LEG. IT IS A DEMANDING MOVE THAT REQUIRES A LOT IN TERMS OF STRENGTH, BALANCE AND AGILITY. ADDING THIS DYNAMIC ROTATIONAL EXERCISE TO YOUR OVERALL STRENGTH AND CONDITIONING ROUTINE CAN HELP YOU FUNCTION MORE EFFECTIVELY



BENT-OVER TRICEP EXTENSIONS

With a dumbbell in each hand, bend at the knees and bring your torso forward keeping your back straight. Keeping your upper arms close to your torso and stationary, use your triceps to extend the dumbbells backwards.

Form Tip: *At the starting position there should be a 90-degree angle between the forearms and the upper arm.*

THE 2x15 WORK-OUT

Perform 2 sets of 15 reps each per workout. When you feel comfortable with the movement patterns, add additional resistance by upping the weight.

- **Dumbbell squat, curl and press**
- **Transverse lunge to overhead press**
- **Bent over tricep extensions**
- **Alternating front lunge with dumbbell row.**
- **Bear crawls (25m)**
- **Sumo squat to transverse lunge**
- **Balanced bicep curls**

ALTERNATING FRONT LUNGE WITH DUMBBELL ROW

Starting position: Step forward into a lunge position. Hold this forward lunge while performing the row movement.

The row: While in the lunge, hold a dumbbell in the hand opposite to your leading leg, to the front. Hold the opposite arm (palm facing inward) to the rear. Perform the row by pulling the weight towards your torso, while the opposite arm moves to the front to assist with stabilising your body during the move. Repeat this back and forth row movement for the required reps, then return to the standing position and repeat on the other side.



FORM TIP

ENGAGE YOUR CORE AND YOUR LEGS THROUGHOUT THE STATIC LUNGE POSITION TO MAINTAIN YOUR BALANCE AND POSTURE.

BUILD STRENGTH IN YOUR CHEST, TRICEPS AND SHOULDERS

BEAR CRAWL

How to: Assume a crawl position on all fours. Don't allow your knees to touch the ground. Crawl forward, keeping your weight balanced on your hands and feet, back straight and a tight core.

COMPLETE ONE SET BY CRAWLING FORWARDS AND BACKWARDS OVER 25M



SUMO SQUAT TO TRANSVERSE LUNGE

How to: Stand with your feet in a wide stance with toes turned outwards. Lower yourself down by bending at your knees. Keep the dumbbell in one hand to the front with your abs tight and back straight.

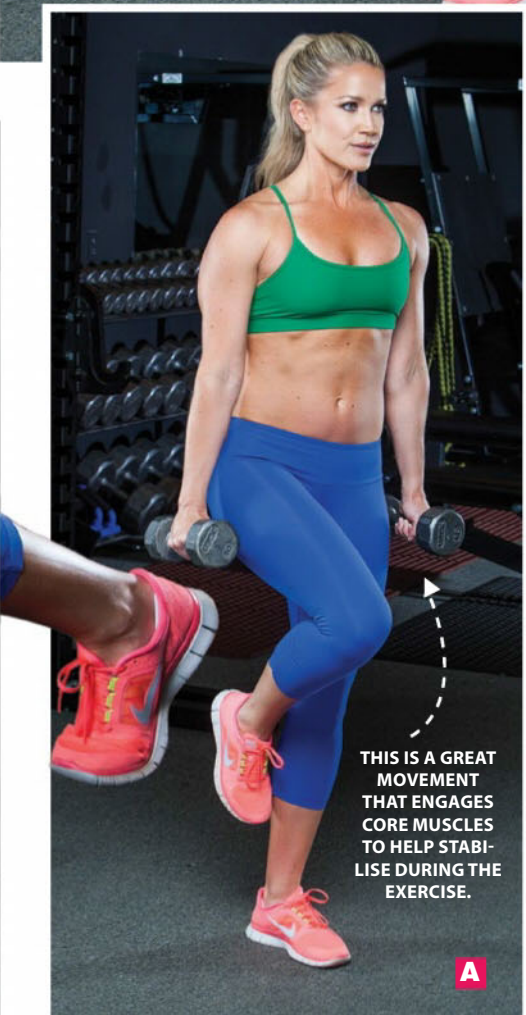
In the transverse lunge: Push your body back up and leg (same side as the weighted arm) into a transverse lunge by stepping back at an angle, not directly back or to the side. As you step into the lunge, extend the weight upwards and overhead. Alternate sides, after each set.



A



B



A



B

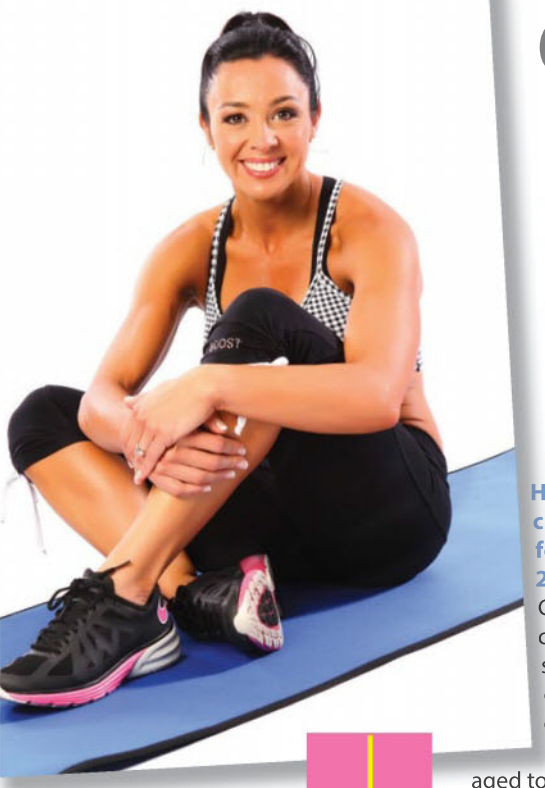
"Having a healthy body has transcended every area of my life in a positive way! I have never felt anything so rewarding as to be able to share this great joy of health with others."

Brooke Stacey

BALANCED BICEP CURLS

Balance your weight on one leg with two dumbbells positioned at either side, palms facing in and arms straight. Keeping your elbows at the sides, raise the dumbbells and rotate your forearms until they're vertical with palms facing the shoulders (curling the weight up in an arc motion). Lower arms to starting position and repeat. Complete required reps then alternate to balance on the other leg.

IRMA VISAGIE -
2012 COVER MODEL



COVER MODEL CATCH-UP

It's often said that reaching your transformation goal is the easy part. It's maintaining your new physique and lifestyle that's the hard part. To give you an idea of what that takes we caught up with our 2012 and 2013 ***fatloss*** cover models, Irma Visagie and Leanda Ludick, to find out what life has been like since we first featured them.

How has your lifestyle changed since we featured you in our 2012 issue?

Getting ready for a cover model photo shoot took a great deal of dedication, a proper diet and the correct supplements. I managed to do it with the help of USN, thanks to the one- year sponsorship I won as part of my prize for winning the USN 94.7 Challenge. During that time in my life I feel like I was at my best, but I'm still in shape now and happy with my physique. I now have an everyday body and a look that is more easy to maintain. I do this by training with weights 5-6 times a week, with cardio three time a week. During the USN Challenge I began running longer distances and started to compete in events. Since my feature I've progressed to running 21.1km half marathon distance races, and have now started training for my first marathon.





How have you managed to maintain your goal weight and condition?

The best approach for me is to have a body that is easily maintainable, and to follow a training programme that can fit into my day-to-day life. I've therefore stuck with what I know works for me, which is regular weight training, cardio, and a proper, clean diet at least 80% of the time.

How have you made your health and fitness lifestyle more sustainable?

On a weekly basis I will buy fresh, healthy, nutritious food, according to the plan I developed in advance. I then simply have to follow this routine, which ensures my daily life functions properly.

How has your *fatloss* cover impacted on your life?

When I achieved a physique worthy of a magazine cover I realised that I had the strength, the discipline and the ability to start and complete something as big as the USN Challenge. I have carried that mindset through to other areas of my life and I'm now always positive and give my all in everything I do. The days when I thought I couldn't do it, and never had a goal in mind are over. Through the 12-week USN Challenge I achieved the best body of my life, and also gained all the knowledge I need to be able to train myself, maintain my health and my body, and to motivate others and feel good about myself.

Since my feature I've progressed to running 21.1km half marathon distance races, and have now started training for my first marathon.



What are your top tips to sustaining a successful transformation over the long term?

1. Have a routine and a training programme.
2. Plan your meals in advance.
3. Buy fresh food as often as possible.
4. Have a grocery list and stick to it.
5. Have a clear picture in your mind of what you want to look like, then tirelessly work towards that goal.
6. Be the best you can be, but be realistic about your goals.
7. Use supplements that are safe for you.
8. Always remember that how you look depends more on how you eat than how you train – you can never out train a bad diet.

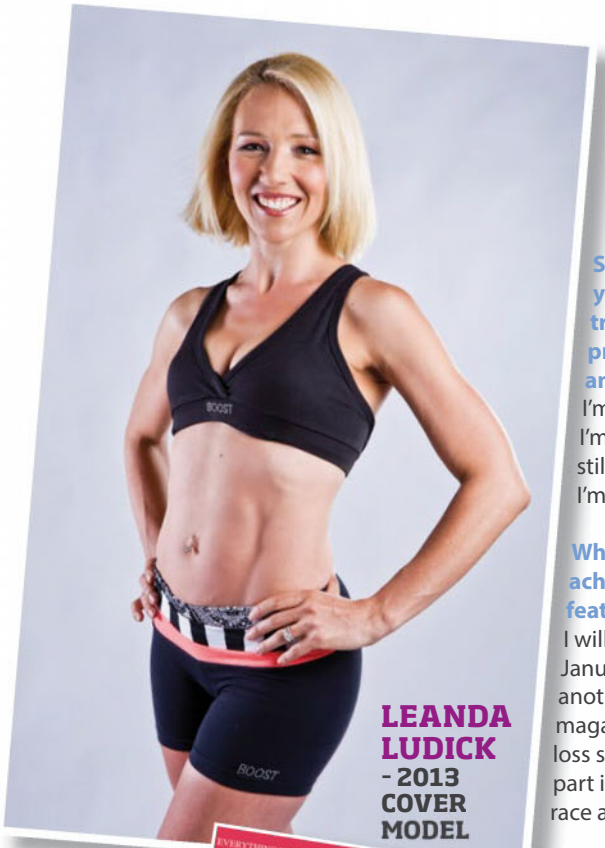


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LEANDA LUDICK - 2013 COVER MODEL









Since we featured you has your transformation progressed in any way?

I'm happy to say that I'm still going strong, still eating healthily and I'm keeping fit.

What else have you achieved since we featured you?

I will be featured in the January 2015 issue of another popular women's magazine, in the weight-loss section. I also took part in my first warrior race and did very well.

What have been some of the challenges you faced since we last spoke?

I never anticipated how challenging it would be to find a balance between not losing any more weight, and not gaining weight. I was retrenched from work a few months after reaching my goal weight, and the stress and difficult new routine proved challenging. It could easily have been an excuse to comfort-eat and stop exercising, but I did the best I could – I exercised at home until I could find a gym close to my new job, and I stuck to my calorie allowance every day. I have times when I start gaining a little weight by unconsciously eating too many calories, but then I go back to the basics and lose the weight again.

I've worked too hard and enjoy my new physique and confidence too much to go back to how I used to look and feel.



How has your *fatloss* cover impacted on your life?

Apart from being incredibly proud of what I have accomplished, I had a lot of friends, colleagues and fellow moms asking for help or advice in achieving their own goals.



Has your approach to a healthy and fit lifestyle changed to make it more sustainable?

While I still work to find the right balance to maintain my goal weight, I just keep doing what I have been doing – making good food choices and exercising frequently and, most importantly, not falling back into the bad habits that made me unhealthy and overweight in the first place. I've worked too hard and enjoy my new physique and confidence too much to go back to how I used to look and feel. I also continue to buy fitness mags or read articles about fitness and nutrition to find better ways of eating and training.

What are your top tips to sustaining a successful transformation over the long term?

1. Don't fall back into old, self-sabotaging, bad habits.
2. Keep setting new goals and challenging yourself.
3. Find activities you love, like taking walks, swimming or hiking to keep fit.
4. When you go through a rough patch and start gaining weight, go back to the basics – make good food choices, watch your calories and exercise.
5. Be mindful of your own challenges so that you can be prepared and stay in control in tough situations.
6. Spend time with people who support your new lifestyle and don't drag you down.
7. Remind yourself of how far you've come and how empowered and confident you feel in your new body.

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BY MARIO VAN BILJON, NHDip:Microbiology

BOOST YOUR FAT LOSS EFFORTS WITH THESE 3 SUPPLEMENT COMBOS

1 CLA + L-CARNITINE

Why use them: Mobilise and metabolise body fat more efficiently.

Conjugated Linoleic Acid (CLA) is a fatty acid naturally present in meat such as beef and lamb, as well as dairy products. As a result of changes to our modern day diets, along with modern day farming and food processing practices, our average daily intake of CLA has fallen dramatically when compared to previous decades. CLA in supplemental form is also research-proven to enhance fat loss and improve body composition.

Under normal circumstances, when dietary fat is not used for energy it is stored in fat cells. The enzyme lipoprotein lipase plays an integral role in the storage of body fat, and CLA has been shown to inhibit this enzyme. As a result, fatty acids seem to be diverted to muscle cells to preferentially be burnt for fuel.

These fatty acids are burnt for energy inside muscle cells, at structures called the mitochondria, but are unfortunately not able to efficiently pass through the mitochondrial membrane in the absence of sufficient L-carnitine. The amount of fat burned is thus directly related to muscle L-carnitine levels, and scientific evidence shows that L-carnitine supplementation can significantly increase the use of fat as an energy source, thereby promoting weight loss.

Combining CLA and L-carnitine is therefore an effective supplement strategy for diverting fatty acids to muscle cells and then, once there, efficiently transporting them into the mitochondria of the cell where they are burnt.

"be sure to check if your product contains stimulants as it may affect your ability to fall asleep. Always consult your doctor before using a thermogenic supplement."



2 CHROMIUM PICOLINATE + LIPOIC ACID + EFAS

Why use them: Stabilise blood sugar levels, optimise insulin sensitivity, control cravings and combat fluctuating energy levels.

Chromium is a mineral that is essential for maintaining optimal insulin metabolism. Since insulin is a hormone that plays a key role in stabilising the body's blood sugar level, it is understandable then that chromium, by way of its support of insulin, can be a very effective supplement for those with a sweet tooth. By better controlling and stabilising blood sugar levels by way of improved insulin metabolism, many cravings can be better warded off.

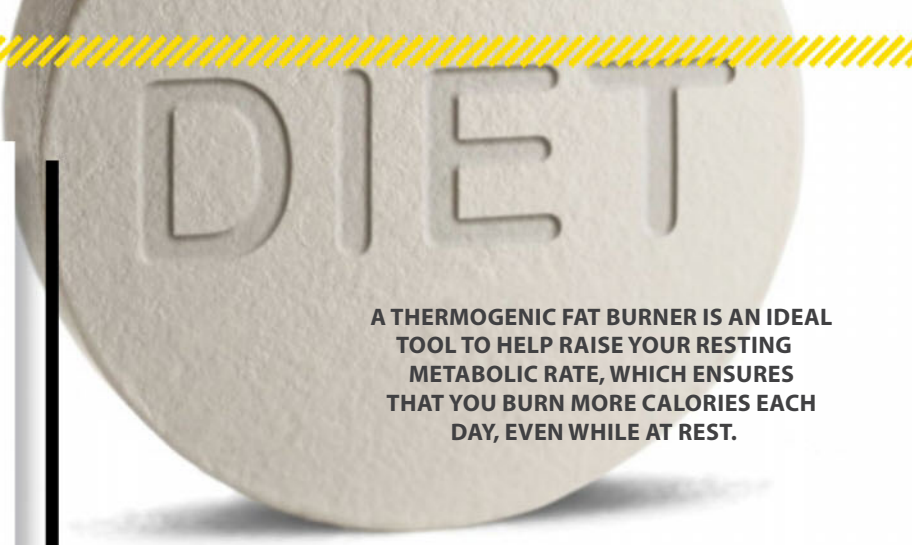
Additionally, chromium plays a valuable role in supporting insulin to facilitate the transport of amino acids and other important nutrients through cell membranes into muscle cells. And by enhancing insulin's effects in the body, chromium supplementation increases energy levels and also stabilises them, which helps to accelerate fat loss and build muscle with greater ease.

Alpha-lipoic acid (ALA) is a powerful antioxidant that can be very helpful to those trying to lose weight and control their blood sugar, as it assists the body in producing energy, in the form of ATP, from glucose. ALA can also lower blood sugar levels, and its ability to kill free radicals may help reduce pain, burning, itching, tingling and numbness in people who have nerve damage caused by diabetes (called peripheral neuropathy).

ALA has also been shown to be helpful in weight loss, and that consistent use can result in body fat reduction, along with a number of other health benefits. It's believed to also assist in increasing the rate of glucose uptake and oxidative metabolism, meaning more energy is used at a faster rate in your cells, which means fewer calories are left to be stored as fat.

Furthermore, enhanced glucose metabolism with the resultant decrease in blood sugar levels certainly helps prevent the storage of body fat. This occurs because poor glucose utilisation results in the release of higher levels of insulin from the pancreas. These elevated insulin levels result in increased fat storage due to the fat-storing nature of high insulin levels, and when this state becomes chronic insulin sensitivity decreases.

And insulin sensitivity is a crucial factor when trying to maximise fat loss. Optimised insulin sensitivity drives more amino acids into muscle cells, which supports muscle growth, and is also crucial for the efficient use of body fat as fuel. Chromium picolinate, EFAs and lipoic acid are all nutrients that have been shown to be effective in supplemental form at optimising insulin sensitivity.



A THERMOGENIC FAT BURNER IS AN IDEAL TOOL TO HELP RAISE YOUR RESTING METABOLIC RATE, WHICH ENSURES THAT YOU BURN MORE CALORIES EACH DAY, EVEN WHILE AT REST.

3 THERMOGENIC FAT BURNERS + BCAA

Why use them: Boost your metabolism to burn more calories

The most effective fat burners typically contain various combinations of thermogenic agents, which are designed to increase noradrenalin (norepinephrine) output, which triggers the cellular fat burning 'switch' by stimulating your body's internal energy burning 'furnace'.

When choosing a thermogenic fat burner opt for a formulation that contains one or more of the following ingredients, which are known to boost thermogenesis:

- **Citrus aurantium**
- **Caffeine**
- **Green tea extract**
- **Guarana**
- **7-Keto**
- **Yerba mate extract**

A thermogenic fat burner is therefore an ideal tool to help raise your resting metabolic rate, which ensures that you burn more calories each day, even while at rest. The other way to achieve that result is to increase the amount of metabolically active muscle tissue you have on your body. This is achieved through a combination of weight training and sufficient protein intake, and there are few better supplements on the market to aid muscle gain than Branched Chain Amino Acids (BCAAs) - three essential amino acids, namely isoleucine, leucine and valine, that play very important roles in the assimilation, maintenance and repair of muscle tissue.

Not only do BCAAs help to build more muscle, which boosts your metabolism, but a growing body of evidence has also emerged that demonstrates the beneficial role BCAAs play in fat loss. There seems to be three key areas where BCAAs benefit fat loss, namely their ability to decrease appetite while increasing metabolism, their ability to decrease the breakdown of muscle protein while on a restricted diet, and they can also greatly reduce perceived exertion during training, which allows you to train longer and harder while in a state of reduced energy.

And if that wasn't enough reason to include BCAAs in your fat loss supplement plan, here is another: A pilot study published in 2008 in the journal AGE also showed that a dose of 12g of the BCAA leucine taken in combination with oleic acid and DHA resulted in 1.8kg (4lbs) of lost weight over a two week period in women over the age of 38. Researchers concluded that "this study demonstrates that leucine … may cause weight loss through signaling mechanisms to the brain and adipose tissue." Interestingly, leucine also seems to interact with the anabolic cell signalling messenger mTOR, which stimulates muscle growth, both alone and together with resistance exercise.



SPEED UP YOUR METABOLISM

1. EAT PLENTY OF PROTEIN-RICH FOODS. Research shows that approximately 25% of calories in a protein rich meal may be burnt off by digestion. Choose low-fat protein foods such as lean meat and fat-free dairy products



2. SPICE THINGS UP. Spices like chilli can raise your metabolism by up to 50% for up to 3 hours after your meal. Just make sure that you choose hot foods that come with a low calorie and fat content.



3. DON'T DRINK ALCOHOL WHILE EATING. Studies have shown that drinking alcohol before a meal can increase how many calories you consume by 20%



GNC Total Lean™ 2-day Juice Cleanse

Kickstart your new year and get rid of the harsh toxins your body has had to endure in 2014 by using GNC's Total Lean™ 2-day Juice Cleanse. GNC's Total Lean™ 2-day Juice Cleanse is a combination of super foods, juices, herbs and vitamins that gives your metabolism a boost and supports energy levels, water balance, healthy digestion and regularity.

Use the Juice Cleanse product in conjunction with other GNC Total Lean™ products and exercise for better results. A nutrition plan, developed by GNC experts is inserted with the product to ensure adequate nutrient intake, while limiting the amount of toxins or chemicals consumed. GNC has an extensive range of products that includes high-potency vitamins, herbal supplements, slimming products and sports nutrition products. The 2-Day Juice Cleanse product is available at GNC concept stores.

For more information on where to find GNC products, visit www.gnc.co.za/stores. Available for R299.00.



USN HYPERLEAN TWO-IN-ONE

USN Hyperlean Two-in-One provides scientifically grounded supplement technology to enhance your recovery rate, deliver explosive energy, and aid body toning. This ß-Alanine and creatine-free option continues to offer the relevant performance benefits of a true performance enhancing pre-workout supplement. This product is ideally suited to anyone who is looking to influence their performance, reduce fatigue, support recovery and accelerate gains.

NutriTech NitroCut NXT

NutriTech's NitroCut has evolved, and is all grown up. Made up of a combination of five key ingredients - garcina cambogia, raspberry ketone, green coffee extract, green tea extract and a powerful triple shot of caffeine (300mg) - NitroCut NXT combines the benefits of these ingredients to bring you the perfect weight management aid to assist your weight loss goals. NitroCut NXT is now DMAA-free and safe for sportsmen and women who are tested for banned substances. *Available at NutriTech stockists nationwide www.nutritech.co.za/stockists*





USN LEAN-8

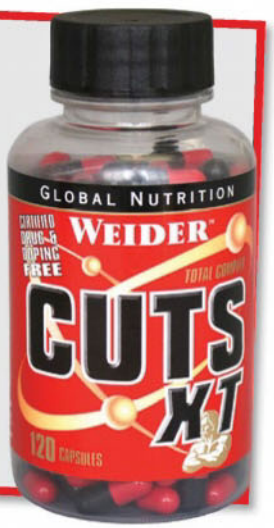
Following more USA-based development USN has launched Lean-8, a high protein, low carb, high fibre product. Designed as a premium lean muscle gain powder, USN Lean-8 contains a selection of protein sources including fast, medium and slow release proteins such as whey concentrate and isolate, milk concentrate and micellar casein. This stimulates protein synthesis while limiting muscle breakdown. The product is an ideal daily snack option for those who aim to enhance muscle tissue recovery and growth. It also contains AminoGenR, a digestive enzyme shown to improve protein digestion and amino acid assimilation, and ToleraseTL to help improve lactose metabolism and digestive comfort.

WEIDER CUTS XT

Weider's Cuts XT has been specifically designed to help boost the metabolism of fat. The unique combination of the powerful ingredients in Weider's Cuts XT will assist in achieving the best results from exercise routines. Properties of the various ingredients are well documented, and include:

- Fat emulsifying lipotropics
- Herbal water loss agents
- Natural energizers
- Circulatory system stimulators
- Muscle fatigue, stiffness & free radical damage inhibitors
- Detoxyfying agents of amines, the by-product of protein metabolism

The Weider name is backed by over 60 years of technological leadership in sports nutrition.





Atkins low-carb, low-sugar range

The range of low-carb, low sugar Atkins products is now available in SA, and includes Advantage bars, Shakes, Endulge bars, Day break bars, pasta, muesli, bread mix and the Atkins New You cook book for quick and easy low-carb healthy meal options. *For further info or to purchase the range visit www.atkinssa.co.za and sa.atkins.com. Products are also available at Dis-Chem, Clicks, Pick 'n Pay and select independent pharmacies and health stores nationwide.*



SUPASHAPE LEAN STACK BODY TRANSFORMATION PACK

Just in time for your summer Supashape 12 Week Online Transformation Challenge, Supashape has combined three powerful products in one convenient pack. The pack consists of Pro Advanced Thermo Lean, a thermogenesis and energy activating fat burner (45 caps), stimulant-free Carnitine Lean, which provides metabolic support (30 capsules), and Ultra CLA, a maximum strength body toner (30 softgel capsules). This weight management system offers an affordable introduction to the Supashape range, with a great choice of supplements to assist with your body transformation.

SUPASHAPE CINOLEAN

Supashape's CinoLean is a decadent, low-fat, low calorie, instant cappuccino with no added sugar and a hint of chocolate flavour. It has also been blended with an extra dose of caffeine for an energy kick. Now available at Dis-Chem, Game and other key retail outlets throughout South Africa.



BIOGEN PHENADRINE THERMOCUT

Biogen Phenadrine Thermocut's latest formulation now also includes Raspberry Ketones, an organic aroma compound found in raspberries and other fruits. This compound regulates adiponectin, a protein used by the body to regulate and improve your metabolism by increasing core body temperature. In doing so it provides an ideal and active aid for any weight management programme. Available at all Dis-Chem stores.





BY PEDRO VAN GAALEN, Managing Editor
DIET SUPPLIED BY CHRISTA NORTH, qualified dietitian
MODELLED BY Lara Bester
DRESSED BY www.boostgymwear.co.za
IMAGE BY Richard Cook

The journey to sexy glutes starts in the kitchen

THE SEXY GLUTES DIET!



ASK ANY EXPERIENCED TRAINER OR TOP FITNESS MODEL AND THEY WILL ALL TELL YOU, EATING CORRECTLY IS THE FIRST STEP TO SEXY GLUTES.

The truth is that the same healthy eating basics apply to any fat loss and body sculpting goal – cut out saturated and trans fats, avoid simple sugars, reduce carb intake during times of limited activity and keep your lean protein intake high. Spread your meals evenly throughout the day into 5-6 small meals, eaten every 2-3 hours.

To make this process as easy as possible, we've provided you with a sample eating plan, along with a few basic guidelines.

Butt basics

- The shape of your buttocks is generally determined by your genes.
- Look to your family to determine what your genetic potential is and set realistic and achievable goals for yourself.
- Not everyone responds in the same way to diet and training. Some ladies will respond quicker to focused glute training and a clean eating plan than others. The trick is to stick to the plan and be consistent; the results will follow...
- Get some help from any number of the butt firming and shaping aids currently on the market. These products include transdermal fat burners and cream and tablets that can help complement your training and healthy nutrition. Don't rely on them though – there are no quick fixes.
- Use supplements intelligently to achieve your goals by adding some whey protein to your eating plan, which helps build lean muscle, and include a fat burner daily to assist with fat loss and improve muscle tone.

<< **TIP TO TIGHT AND TONED GLUTES:** INSTEAD OF FLEXING YOUR LOWER LEG ON THE SINGLE-LEG STANDING LEG-CURL MACHINE, RATHER ROLL THE PAD UP AND DOWN YOUR LEG. YOU'LL FEEL THE BURN IN THOSE BUNS AND IT WILL WORK ON DEALING WITH ANY 'SAGGY BUM' EFFECT.



FATLOSS mag's sexy glute sample menu:

Use 1 cup of fat-free milk/yoghurt per day
You can also add 1 of the following per day:

Low oil salad dressing	*30ml*	Low oil mayonaise	*15ml*
Lower fat margarine	*15ml*	Vegetable oils e.g. olive oil	*10ml*
Hummus, low-fat	*30ml*	Olives	*40g*
Nuts e.g. almonds, macadamia, cashew	*15ml*	Seeds e.g. pumkin, sesame, sunflower	*15g*
Natural peanut butter	*15ml*	Avocado	*25g*

	Breakfast	Snack	Lunch	Snack	Dinner	Other	Total servings/day
General							1
Starch/Bread	1		1		1		3
Meats/Subs	3	1	3	1	3	1	12
Milk fat-free	0.5			0.5			1
Vegetables			2		2		4
Fruits	1	1		1			3

Nutritional ratios:
Carbs: 40%
Protein: 35%
Fats: 25%

Abbreviations

LF = low fat
FF = fat free
w/w = whole wheat
tbsp = tablespoon
tsp = teaspoon
cup = 250ml

Sample Meal Plan

BREAKFAST					
1/2 cup Pronutro + 1/2 cup fat-free milk/yoghurt 3 eggs 1 portion fruit 1/4 breakfast paw-paw	**OR**	1 cup cooked oats + 1/2 cup fat-free milk/yoghurt 150g tinned sardines in tomato sauce 1 cup (125g) berries	**OR**	1 slice low-GI or rye bread + 1/2 cup fat-free milk/yoghurt 1.5 cup baked beans 1 large kiwifruit (100g)	
MID-MORNING SNACK					
1 portion fruit e.g. 1 small apple & pear (100g) 75g (3 tablespoons) tuna in brine	**OR**	8 (75g) litchis 30g lean biltong	**OR**	1 cup (100g) melon 2 thin pieces chicken breast (50g)	
LUNCH					
1/2 medium sweet potato 300g white fish 2 cups raw or 1 cup cooked seasonal vegetables of choice e.g. gem squash filled with mixed vegetables	**OR**	3/4 cup couscous 150g chicken (skinless) Lettuce, tomatoes, cucumber, red onions and radishes	**OR**	1/2 cup cooked wholewheat pasta 150g very lean beef fillet Spinach and butternut	
MID-AFTERNOON SNACK					
+ 1/2 cup fat-free milk/yoghurt 1 portion fruit e.g. 4 apricots (120g) 2 thin pieces chicken breast (50g)	**OR**	+ 1/2 cup fat-free milk/yoghurt 1/2 cup (85g) pineapple 75g (3 tablespoons) tuna in brine	**OR**	1/2 cup fat-free milk/yoghurt 8 (75g) grapes 30g lean biltong	
DINNER					
3 baby boiled potatoes 150g lean ostrich 2 cups raw or 1 cup cooked seasonal vegetables of choice e.g. broccoli, cauliflower and carrots	**OR**	1/2 cup cooked brown rice 150g lean pork fillet Baby marrows, onions, cabbage and aubergines	**OR**	1/2 cup cooked noodles 150g salmon Peppers, green beans and beetroot	
EVENING SNACK					
30g lean biltong		1/2 protein bar (35g)		1 egg	

Energy: Approximately 8 000kJ (1 911 Calories) per day.



BLAST CALORIES AND BUILD A STRONGER BODY WITH OUR FULL BODY FUNCTIONAL WORKOUT *SEE P66*



WHY YOUR WEIGHT AND FAT LOSS GOALS SHOULD BE MORE THAN SKIN DEEP

WHILE LOSING WEIGHT AND SHEDDING THAT EXCESS UNSIGHTLY BODY FAT IS, MORE OFTEN THAN NOT, DRIVEN BY OUR DESIRE TO LOOK GOOD, THERE ARE OTHER EXTREMELY BENEFICIAL SPIN-OFFS FOR YOUR HEALTH.

THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF WEIGHT LOSS

Before we get into the positive aspects of weight loss it's important to highlight the myriad conditions that are associated with excess weight and obesity. **The multitude of diseases overweight individuals are often plagued with include:**

- Insulin resistance
- Cancer
- Type-2 diabetes
- High cholesterol
- Heart disease
- High blood pressure
- Stroke
- Infertility
- Osteoarthritis
- Back pain
- Depression

Photograph by James Patrick | **Modelled by** Samantha Kozuch





HEALTH FIRST

These risk factors alone should be enough to get you moving and eating a healthier diet today as most are life-threatening or, at the very least, significantly reduce your life expectancy. For these reasons your weight and fat loss efforts should be focused on more than just the superficial as there is much more to life than a good body.

Thankfully obesity doesn't have to be a death sentence. Simply lowering your body weight can prevent or even reverse most of these conditions, particularly insulin resistance, type-2 diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and high triglyceride levels. In addition, weight loss has also been shown to improve sleep quality as it helps to reduce sleep apnea and alleviates other sleep problems.

Bringing your body weight back within acceptable norms (generally measured in terms of your body mass index or BMI – your ideal weight for your height) then you also place less stress on your joints and the supporting structures in your body like ligaments and tendons. This often reduces the likelihood or severity of joint pain or associated injuries, if not alleviating them completely. The most common joint pain reported by overweight individuals is knee and lower back pain.

There are also other, less tangible, benefits to significant weight loss, not least of which are greater self-worth, enhanced self-confidence, and a general feeling of wellbeing and vitality. This all equates to a better quality of life.

For instance, most obese individuals will complain of chronic fatigue, depression and general lethargy. These conditions are often reversed and the positive benefits amplified when you include regular exercise in your weight and fat loss efforts, as this helps to strengthen and improve your cardiorespiratory and cardiovascular systems, enhances mobility and improves your functional strength.

Overweight and obese individuals also rarely challenge themselves as they either don't have the physical capacity to do the things they want or the confidence to take on a challenge. Whether it's simply playing and running around (or after) their kids, competing in a sporting event, or fulfilling life-long aspirations of climbing a mountain or seeing the world, the layer of lard encasing their body is what weighs most people down and holds them back from participating in life.

THE GOOD NEWS

A great deal of available research shows that losing just 10% of your body weight can significantly improve your health and, subsequently, your longevity. That means you don't have to lose 20kg or more to start experiencing the benefits of weight loss.

Numerous weight loss studies show that when patients lose between 5-10% of their body weight *they lower their blood pressure, reduce LDL cholesterol levels, improve glucose tolerance, and lower their risk for cardiovascular disease.*

JUST A FEW OF THE RESULTS FROM THESE STUDIES INDICATE THAT BY LOSING JUST 5-10% OF YOUR BODY WEIGHT,

- Blood pressure, both systolic and diastolic, decreases by 5 mmHg on average,
- A key marker of diabetes (Haemoglobin A1C) can decrease by half a point on average, almost equalling the effect that some anti-diabetic pills have on blood sugars,
- Even modest weight loss significantly decreased insulin levels and improved insulin sensitivity,
- Individuals with mild sleep apnea who required the use of a breathing machine (called a continuous positive airway pressure or CPAP) were often able to be weaned from it after losing 5-10% of their body weight,
- Levels of inflammatory substances circulating in the blood drop significantly, which reduces the risk of vascular damage that can cause strokes or heart disease.

While these benefits may seem hugely disproportionate to the amount of weight lost, these seemingly exponential returns have been attributed to the effects that reducing visceral fat produces. In addition to all the health risks already mentioned, visceral fat, also known as organ fat or intra-abdominal fat, increases your risk of dementia, and is more closely associated with the metabolic dysfunction linked to obesity.

Another reason why visceral fat is more detrimental to our health is the role it plays in chronic inflammation. Visceral adipose tissue produces pro-inflammatory cytokines such as tumor necrosis factor-alpha (TNF-alpha) and interleukin-6 (IL-6), and it also produces less adiponectin – a beneficial hormone that makes the liver and muscles more insulin sensitive – than white fat cells.

So, if you have an apple or pear shape (significant subcutaneous and visceral belly fat) your weight and fat loss efforts should, first and foremost aim to improve your health before you look to enhance the appearance of your body.

A study conducted by healthcare company Kaiser Permanente that compared people with different levels of belly fat showed that those who had the most belly fat were 145% more likely to develop dementia compared with people with the least amount of belly fat.

SUCCESSFUL FAT LOSS IS ALL ABOUT MAKING THE RIGHT CHOICES. HERE ARE A FEW SIMPLE FOOD SWOPS YOU CAN MAKE TO GET YOU ON THE ROAD TO FAT LOSS SUCCESS.



Don't eat that, try this...

Avoid these food faux pas to keep your fat loss efforts on track







BREAKFAST

✗ DON'T EAT
FLAVOURED INSTANT OATS WITH SLICED BANANA

SERVING	CARBS	FATS	PROTEINS	FIBRE	GL	GI	CALORIES
1 cup	34.5g	4.1g	4.2g	3.6g	45	130	192
1 medium banana	20.5g	0.5g	1.0g	1.5g	12	58	86
Total	**55.0g**	**4.6g**	**5.2g**	**4.51g**	**57**	**188**	**278**

TRY THIS ✓
TWO BOILED EGGS AND A BOWL OF ROLLED OATS

SERVING	CARBS	FATS	PROTEINS	FIBRE	CALORIES
1 cup	21.1g	3.7g	3.7g	3.5g	144
2 eggs	1.2g	10.6g	12.6g	0g	153
Total	**22.3g**	**14.1g**	**16.3g**	**3.5g**	**297**

Why...

The Glycaemic Load (GL) and Index (GI) of flavoured oats is extremely high. This means you get a surge in blood sugar soon after breakfast, but then your energy levels plummet. This can lead to early morning cravings and snacking. The boiled eggs and rolled oats meal delivers more sustained energy as these oats have a lower GI and GL. The eggs also deliver a protein kick to start your day, which is essential after your night-time fast.

LUNCH



✗ DON'T EAT
BEEF HAMBURGER ON A BUN

SERVING	CARBS	FATS	PROTEINS	FIBRE	CALORIES
1 hamburger	26.8g	11.0g	14.6g	1.1g	270

TRY THIS ✓
A WHOLEWHEAT CHICKEN WRAP



SERVING	CARBS	FATS	PROTEINS	FIBRE	CALORIES
1 wrap	16g	8g	23g	5g	200

Why...

The hamburger bun contains simple carbs and the patty is packed full of saturated fats. Any condiments you use on your hamburger will also significantly increase the fat and calorie content of your meal. Homemade chicken wraps, on the other hand, are the way to go – just control what sauces and, more importantly, how much sauce you put on them. Adding sauces and other extras like cheese can easily take a 200 calorie wrap to over 1000 calories, so be careful. But this is still a better option than the hamburger. The wrap is also a much better option than the bun, even if it is a whole-wheat roll, as it contains fewer carbs. There are also fewer calories in the wrap (if the aforementioned guidelines are followed).

DINNER



✗ DON'T EAT
SPAGHETTI BOLOGNAISE (MADE WITH LEAN MINCE

SERVING	CARBS	FATS	PROTEINS	FIBRE	CALORIES
1 bowl	53g	23g	27g	5g	432

TRY THIS ✓
CHICKEN OR TURKEY GARDEN SALAD



SERVING	CARBS	FATS	PROTEINS	FIBRE	CALORIES
100g salad	2.4g	1.3g	10.5g	0.9g	105

Why...

The chicken salad offers the perfect meal for the end of the day – there are almost no carbs, so nothing will get stored as fat while you sleep. You can even have a second helping if you still feel hungry, or simply add more protein to increase the feeling of satiety before bedtime, without adding any unwanted calories. The calorie content in the bolognaise can also increase if you use pre-made sauces, or if you're too liberal with your home-made mix. Mince is also packed full of saturated fat.

REFERENCES:
- *The South African Glycemic Index and Load Guide*
- *Livestrong.com*
- *MyFitnesspal.com*
- *CalorieLookup.com*

*FIGURES ARE USED AS REFERENCE ONLY. NUTRITIONAL VALUES MAY VARY BETWEEN PRODUCTS AND BRANDS.



Water is always a good idea to drink throughtout the day



LUNCH

DON'T DRINK ICED TEA

SERVING	CARBS	FATS	PROTEINS	FIBRE	CALORIES
300ml	27.3g	0.0g	0.0g	0.0g	444

TRY THIS COCA-COLA LITE OR ZERO

SERVING	CARBS	FATS	PROTEINS	FIBRE	CALORIES
330ml	6.6g	0.0g	1.7g	0.0g	132

Why...

If you're looking for a drink to add some flavour to your meal or quench a thirst then you are just adding unnecessary kilojoules to your lunchtime meal by drinking iced tea. With almost three times less kilojoules and around four times fewer carbs, the Coca-Cola Lite or Zero is a better option in this instance. However, in every situation water is always the best option.

DURING EXERCISE



DON'T DRINK SPORTS OR ENERGY DRINK

SERVING	CARBS	FATS	PROTEINS	FIBRE	CALORIES
500ml	35.0g	0.5g	0.5g	0.0g	600

TRY THIS WHEY PROTEIN MIXED WITH WATER

SERVING	CARBS	FATS	PROTEINS	FIBRE	CALORIES
300ml (30g whey serving)	3.0g	2.0g	23.0g	1.0g	502



Why...

Studies show that your muscles are equally receptive to amino acids during exercise, as they are after training. By drinking a whey protein shake while you exercise you start to repair and rebuild muscle sooner. The high carb content of the energy drink will also dump a large amount of glycogen into your bloodstream, which means your body will stop tapping into fat stores for energy. This is detrimental to your efforts if you wish to lose fat and weight. The whey shake also delivers fewer kilojoules, which is important for all the reasons just mentioned.

REFERENCES:
- *The South African*
- *Glycemic Index and Load Guide*
- *Livestrong.com*
- *nutritiondata.self.com*
- *fatsecret.com*

HERE ARE A FEW ADDITIONAL FOOD CHOICES YOU CAN MAKE THAT WILL HAVE A BIG IMPACT ON YOUR HEALTH AND FAT LOSS EFFORTS.

BEAT IT	EAT IT
Salt	Himalayan rock salt
Sugar, fructose, sweetener	Xylitol, organic honey
Breads, pastas	Rye bread, brown/basmati rice, potatoes, corn, legumes, barley
Red meat	Chicken, fish, eggs, legumes, nuts (restrict red meat to once a week)
Chocolate cake, brownies, biscuits	Carob truffles, raw chocolate, organic chocolate with more than 75% cocoa mass
Alcohol	Drink water whenever possible, but white wine and whiskey are the lowest calorie options. Red wine is slightly higher in calories, but offers a whopping supply of antioxidants when drunk in moderation
Concentrated fruit juices	Fresh fruit and vegetable juices
Refined cereals/porridges	Raw organic oats
Full-cream milk	Organic fat-free milk, rice milk, almond milk, calcium-enriched soy milk
Creamy sauces	Fresh herbs, chillies, garlic, ginger, homemade pesto
Cooked veggies	Raw veggies
Sunflower, canola oil	Olive oil, coconut oil, palm oil
Sweets	Goji berries, fruit, baked dates (Jerusalem toffees)
Butter/margarine	Hummus, tahini, fresh guacamole, seed butters, nut butters
Tea/coffee	Green tea, rooibos tea, herbal teas
Oily, deep fried chips	Oven chips with Himalayan rock salt and cayenne pepper
Crisps, microwave popcorn	Low sodium pretzels, air-popped popcorn or popcorn cooked in coconut oil and Himalayan rock salt
Chocolate spread	Organic peanut butter

Information supplied by: Lisa Raleigh

**Figures are used as reference only. Nutritional values may vary between products, brands and preparation techniques.*



BY LAETITIA RYKER, Life Coach
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5 THINGS I WISH I KNEW WHEN I WEIGHED 90KG

I truly believe that everything that happens to us holds meaning, especially the hard or the difficult times we endure. For instance, the difficult times I went through in my life have taught me the most; not only about myself, but about life in general. Every period of difficulty or struggle can be an opportunity for us to acquire wisdom. Accordingly, every struggle has the capacity to make us stronger.



One of the biggest struggles in my life was overcoming my weight problem. How I felt when I was overweight isn't something that I can really explain to anyone because it's something that you experience on such a deep and personal level. All too often the fight against weight becomes a solitary battle, and you eventually become tired of the struggle because it's so much easier to act as if it doesn't bother you.

In all honesty, it didn't matter how hard I tried to adopt a carefree attitude, being overweight always bothered me.

While I know a few people who are overweight and genuinely aren't bothered by it as they accept themselves completely, these people are few and far between. In general, when someone is overweight it bothers them deeply. They therefore tend to follow one diet after the other in the hopes of losing weight.

THE NEED TO CONFORM

One of the reasons why we're so preoccupied with our weight and being thin is because of the stereotypical image of the ideal physique that is portrayed in mainstream and social media. While conforming to popular stereotypes is generally an unhealthy motivator for weight loss, more recently the media has also helped to drive awareness around the health implications of obesity. The health implications of being overweight are numerous, and the prevalence of lifestyle-related disease has meant that the media are making people more health conscious.

It is for these reasons that it is important to firstly establish why it is you want to lose weight. Do you want to lose weight because you are really unhealthy? Do you really have weight to lose or are you merely trying to follow the standards that are set by the media?

One thing that I learnt early on in my transformation journey was that success is determined mainly by your reason for wanting to transform – your motivation. This is because there are two forms of motivation; intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation.

1. Intrinsic motivation: When you're motivated by something on the inside that is independent of rewards and outcomes.

2. Extrinsic motivation: When you're motivated by something outside of yourself such as receiving rewards (for example, money) for showing the desired behaviour (receiving good grades).

If you want to be successful it's important that your 'why' is intrinsic, because it's the only form of motivation that is lasting.

Extrinsic motivation is something that is fleeting or momentary as it can be taken away at any time. That's because extrinsic motivation is usually reliant on someone else. There are a lot of things that fall in the category of extrinsic motivation. Let's say your goal is fat loss, and your motivation is extrinsic, then the things that motivate you would look something like this:

- The picture in your head of how your body is going to look motivates you.
- The fact that everyone said you couldn't do it motivates you.
- You have a new partner and you want to look good for him.
- You're going on holiday and you want to look good in a bikini.

While there is nothing inherently wrong with the things mentioned above, the problem with using these motivators as your primary reason for losing weight is the fact that they can all change in an instant. Let's say, for instance, that you achieve the body that you imagined. What is going to motivate you to keep it?

LIFESTYLE CHANGE

A lot of people also decide to make a lifestyle change because others said they couldn't do it or because they want to impress someone else, but when the going gets tough impressing others often isn't enough of a motivator to see you through the hardships. Are you really going to wake up day after day to go to the gym for someone else? Are you really going to eat one healthy meal after the other for the sake of impressing someone else? Those people won't be there every time you have to make a healthy choice or every morning when you have to get yourself out of bed to go to gym.

We can only do so much for someone else. When we get tired, or when we lose motivation and we don't have an intrinsic reason to keep going then we're unlikely to see our transformation through.

The fact that we have to be intrinsically motivated isn't something that I knew from the start, it's something that I learnt along the way. In all honesty, my transformation taught me a lot of things, not least of which is the fact that going through a transformation doesn't always turn out the way you think it would - the picture that we have in our mind doesn't always match reality.

I also had a number of other eye-openers during my transformation. Before I started I had expectations about how things will progress and how things will end, but ultimately things turned out quite differently. Having these expectations and preconceived ideas that weren't realised was difficult to accept, which is why I wish that I had been more prepared. If someone had told me all the things I needed to know before I started, perhaps the experience would have been different for me.

BUT THANKFULLY FOR YOU I WENT THROUGH IT ALL AND CAN NOW SHARE THE FIVE THINGS I WISH I KNEW WHEN I WEIGHED 90KG, BEFORE I STARTED MY TRANSFORMATION. HOPEFULLY THEY WILL HELP YOU ON YOUR JOURNEY...





"Be happy now, without reason – or you never will be at all"
– Dan Millman, Way of the Peaceful Warrior



1 HAPPINESS IS A CHOICE

There is a lie that is perpetuated through advertising and social media, which leads many to believe that being thin or skinny will result in happiness and success. The converse also holds true in the mind of many - if you're fat or overweight you're probably sad or unhappy and unsuccessful.

Although this message is being conveyed to us very subtly, it still has a major effect on our thoughts and perceptions. We end up constantly comparing ourselves with others, and we tell ourselves that we'll be happy if we're thin, if we lose weight or if we fit into a certain dress. We therefore end up living a life where happiness is conditional. When I lost all the weight my state of happiness didn't change one bit. Yes, I was proud of myself and I received praise from others for what I had achieved, but deep down inside I still wasn't happy.

I wish I knew that happiness is a choice when I embarked on my weight loss journey. Lasting happiness isn't something that comes with achieving a number on a scale or a dress size. Happiness doesn't have anything to do with our outward appearance. Happiness is determined by our mindset, especially what we choose to focus on. There is always something to be grateful for and as soon as you realise this you'll know that happiness isn't conditional, it's something that you choose.

2 SOME PEOPLE ARE VERY SUPERFICIAL

I wish someone had told me how superficial people can be before I lost weight. There were a lot of people who became my friends after I lost the weight, many of whom didn't even look at me twice before my weight loss.

When I realised that people could be so superficial I got really mad. Although I had lost the weight, I was still the same person. The only thing that had changed was my outward appearance, yet people suddenly changed the way they treated me. I just couldn't understand how people can judge someone purely on how you look, with a complete disregard for who you really are as a person. If people actually took the time to get to know me before the weight loss they would've known that I was still the same person.

If I had known how superficial people can be I would've known that the friends that I had before my weight loss were my true friends, and that I shouldn't waste my energy on people who had hidden agendas.

"Hastiness and superficiality are the psychic diseases of the twentieth century."
– Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn



3 WEIGHT LOSS HAS NO MAGIC POWERS

When I think back to the time before I started my transformation journey, I think there was a part of me that hoped that losing weight will magically fix everything else. There was a part of me that hoped that once I had lost all the weight I would not struggle with a bad self-image anymore, and that I would instantly forget all the words that had been spoken about me earlier in my life. There was a part of me that hoped my thought patterns and negative inner self-talk would automatically change when the reflection I saw in the mirror was closer to the image that I had in my mind. Unfortunately this wasn't the case at all. I quickly found out that weight loss has no magic powers.

When I finally reached my goal weight I realised that I still had all the same emotions with regard to my past. I still had a self-image problem, and my inner self-talk was just as negative as before. This was probably one of the hardest realisations that I have ever had to face, because I had an expectation that losing all the weight would fix everything. When it didn't I felt hopeless.

Once I made peace with the fact that weight loss has no magic powers, my real transformation began. That's when I opened up my thoughts and mind to accepting that nothing in life comes easy and that everything is a work in progress. I made peace with the fact that my bad self-image is something that I'm going to have to work on daily. I accepted that my thought patterns won't automatically change when I have a new body, and I realised that changing my thought patterns takes practice and that it's something that I can get better at.

Losing the weight didn't make me automatically forget all the negative remarks or comments from my past, and that for true healing to occur I would need to forgive.

I wish I knew beforehand that weight loss has no magic powers. Maybe then I could have worked on all these things from the start. Like I always say; outside transformation doesn't mean a thing if inner transformation doesn't also occur.



"The only unique contribution you can offer the world is to be who you actually are and no one else."
– Ashly Lorenzana

4 STRIVE FOR PROGRESS, NOT PERFECTION

Another thing that I wish I knew before I started my transformation is that it's better to strive for progress than for perfection. When I started my journey the perfectionist in me wanted to do everything perfectly. Part of me even believed that if I slipped up in any way then I'd be a failure.

I soon learnt that trying to be perfect was exhausting, and not humanly possible. The day that I chose to focus on progress, rather than perfection, was the day my journey became a lot easier. That's when I allowed myself to be human, instead of chastising myself with each mistake.

You need to realise that progress is a three-steps-forward and two-steps-back process. The only thing that matters is that you keep moving forward, and that you allow yourself to learn with every failed attempt. This is the only way to ensure that you actually enjoy the journey.

"If you look for perfection, you'll never be content."
– Leo Tolstoy, Anna Karenina

5 LOSING WEIGHT, AND KEEPING IT OFF, IS HARD

Before I started my weight loss journey a part of me thought; "once I lose all the weight I will never have to worry about my weight again". However, after losing the weight I quickly realised that maintaining my weight wasn't a given. In fact, I soon realised that it was going to take hard work and conscious effort, day in and day out. For a transformation to be successful you have to make a concerted effort to change your daily habits, because these are the things that determine your behaviour, as well as your lifestyle. Through my own journey I realised that most people don't succeed at their transformations because they don't realise how much work they're going to have to put in for the rest of their lives.

"Unless commitment is made, there are only promises and hopes; but no plans." – Peter F. Drucker

With that, I want to offer you a final word of encouragement. There is a way to make the transformation easier and lasting – change as much on the inside as you do on the outside. **Remember, it's as much a mental transformation as it is a physical one.**

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GET THE BALANCE RIGHT TO GET THE MOST FROM YOUR WEIGHT LOSS EFFORTS



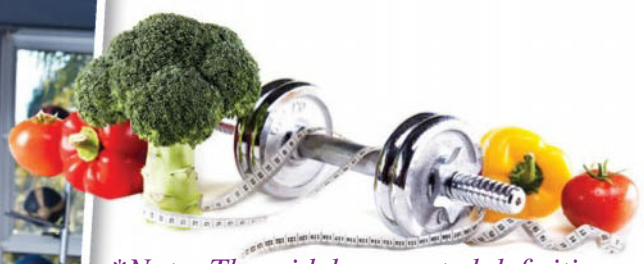
PHOTOGRAPHY BY James Patrick **MODELLED BY** Paula Wheeler

THE 80/20 PRINCIPLE

80% OF YOUR EFFORTS SHOULD BE FOCUSED ON YOUR DIET, 20% ON EXERCISE.

ANYONE WHO HAS EVER RESEARCHED WEIGHT LOSS OR FAT LOSS IN AN ATTEMPT TO ACHIEVE THE BODY THEY'VE ALWAYS WANTED WOULD PROBABLY HAVE HEARD ABOUT THE 80/20 RULE. In this instance the principle states that 80% of your weight loss efforts should be focused on your diet, and the remaining 20% on exercise. That's because exercise in isolation is largely inefficient at reducing weight, an inconvenient truth for many in the health and fitness industry, but one that is backed by science.





**Note: The widely accepted definition and use of the 80-20 rule, also known as the Pareto principle, states that, for many events, roughly 80% of the effects come from 20% of the causes.*

AN EXERCISE IN FUTILITY

A growing body of research emerging from the US and UK now shows that, in general, no or modest weight loss is achieved with exercise alone. Researchers have attributed this to a number of factors. For instance, a study led by Diana Thomas, a professor of mathematics at Montclair State University in New Jersey, and published in the October 2012 edition of Obesity Review, found that "the small magnitude of weight loss observed from the majority of evaluated exercise interventions is primarily due to low doses of prescribed exercise energy expenditures compounded by a concomitant (associated) increase in caloric intake."

What this means is that most people simply don't have enough time to exercise for the duration required to burn a significant number of calories. For example, according to information available from the Mayo Clinic, during an hour-long exercise session – the maximum amount of time most of us have on a daily basis to train - a 73kg individual will only burn 533 calories doing high intensity aerobics, 606 calories while jogging, 657 calories on the stepper, or 314 calories while walking.

When you consider that this is the calorie content of just one of your 4-5 small, healthy meals each day, or just two doughnuts if you indulge, you then start to realise that, from a practical perspective, exercise is never going to be an effective way to lose weight.

And picking up the intensity of your session isn't likely to help much either. While you will burn more calories, researchers have found that this merely makes people more hungry, so they eat more after exercise, the other point raised by Prof. Thomas and her team in the study.

Often referred to as 'compensation', this exercise-induced hunger generally cancels out the calories that someone would have burnt during the session. In fact, many people also tend to consume more calories than they burnt as they reward themselves after a hard session.

This theory was confirmed in an 18-month study on children, conducted by Boston academics Steven Gortmaker and Kendrin Sonneville, published in 2008. The researchers investigated what they termed "the energy gap" – the daily imbalance between energy intake and expenditure — and found that when the children in their experiment exercised they ended up eating up to 20 times as many calories than they had just burnt.

Interestingly, a study by researchers at the University of Copenhagen found that healthy, sedentary, moderately overweight young men who exercised at moderate intensities enjoyed a similar degree of body fat loss than those who exercised at higher intensities. In fact, researchers found that a "moderate dose of exercise induced a markedly greater than expected negative energy balance, while a higher dose induced a small but quantifiable degree of compensation."

EXERCISE AND DIET

So, should you ditch the gym contract then? Certainly not! There are many other benefits to be gained from regular exercise, be it cardio or weight training, not least of which are improved health and a toned, shapely body.

The take home message from this article should be that your war on weight and excess body fat should be waged in the kitchen, not out on the road or in the gym. However, there is benefit to a strategic pincer attack – a two-pronged approach to weight loss – according to a 2012 study published in the journal Obesity that looked at the effect of diet and exercise, alone or combined, on weight and body composition. During the year-long study on 439 overweight-to-obese post-menopausal sedentary women, researchers demonstrated that the greatest effects on weight loss and body composition were found in the combined intervention group, where 60% of participants lost 10% or more of their bodyweight in one year.

This means you'll derive greater benefit from reducing your calorie intake, controlling your portion sizes, and moderating your insulin response by manipulating or reducing your carb intake, as we discussed in our LCHF article on page 34. Once you get that element right you can then add the right type, amount and intensity of exercise to the mix to aid your weight and fat loss efforts, and help sculpt your body.



Most people simply don't have enough time to exercise for the duration required to burn a significant number of calories.

OTHER APPLICATIONS

You'll also find references to the 80/20 rule as a proposed healthier approach to eating. According to the rule, popularised in the book "The 80/20 Diet" by Teresa Cutter, you must choose healthy foods 80% of the time, and you're allowed to indulge 20%.

However, this approach is open to abuse and manipulation. For instance, splitting a week up in this ratio means you would eat clean for 5.5 days, and can then indulge for 1.5 days, perhaps over the weekend. The truth is that a day and a half of uncontrolled eating can easily add back all the calories you've 'cut' from our diet during the week, so you're no better off. A more conservative approach, should you choose to follow these guidelines, would be to add a treat to seven of your meals a week, if you eat five smaller meals per day.

By Devlin Brown and Pedro van Gaalen

FINDING THE BALANCE

MASTERING THE JUGGLING ACT THAT IS HEALTHY WEIGHT LOSS IN AN AGE OF EXTREMISM



A saying that one often hears the older generation mutter is: "everything in moderation". While this is open to criticism, one cannot help but see the merits in the logic. A more recent saying, often brandished on t-shirts, states: "obsessed is a word the lazy use to describe the dedicated".

Sure, moderation doesn't make one think of excellence, but it does instil a sense of calm. You cannot become the best at something if you are moderately motivated or dedicated, but you won't become morbidly obese or develop chronic health problems if everything is done in moderation. On the other end of the spectrum, the second saying gives one the sense of "all or nothing". However, it is also easy to see how an absolute focus on one aspect of one's life may lead to the detriment of the others.

Now, we're by no means advocating mediocrity in this article. What we are doing is looking at how striking a balance is often a better way to go with regard to lifestyle choices than taking an all-or-nothing approach.

DROPPING THE BALL

Read this quote by James Patterson:

"Imagine life is a game in which you are juggling five balls. The balls are called work, family, health, friends and integrity. And you're keeping them all in the air. But one day you finally come to understand that work is a rubber ball. If you drop it, it will bounce back. The other four balls... are made of glass. If you drop one of these, it will be irrevocably scuffed, nicked, perhaps even shattered."

Now, while this quote in itself is a lesson for all of us in the priorities of life and what truly matters when we're old and grey, it also serves as a handy metaphor for finding balance in our quest to become healthier and fitter.

Let us look at the glass ball called health. If we obsess over this ball, to



PHOTOGRAPH BY James Patrick
MODELLED BY Koya Webb



Let's remind ourselves why we want to be healthy in the first place ... so that we can be stronger mothers and enjoy quality time with our children.

the detriment of the other four, what will happen? If we drop the ball at work – well, it will bounce back up, over and over again. But if our obsession with health causes us to drop our family, friends and integrity, well then the warning is a lot more stark. Having the body of our dreams means nothing when no one loves us, all our friends have deserted us and our integrity is in tatters. Sure, this is extreme, but extreme behaviour can lead to extreme outcomes.

Finding a balance in our health and fitness doesn't stop there. It goes beyond looking out for the pillars that make up our existence. Enjoying balance in our approach is the surest way that we'll stick to our new lifestyle choices. The rewards make sticking to a plan far more likely than if the life we live, in pursuit of our goals, is not worth living.

CREATE A PLAN AND STICK TO IT

The surest way to ensure that you strike a balance and find a routine to live the healthiest and best life possible is to draw up a plan and then try and stick to it.

1) Research – learn about nutrition and exercise
2) Plan your eating habits and meals in advance
3) Draw up a well-thought-out exercise plan (or have an exercise professional do it for you)
4) Schedule personal and group recreational activities
5) Sleep enough, but don't sleep too much

Exercise and **diet** are probably the two most common areas where people can become obsessed and end up hurting themselves. Too much of a good thing can be bad for you.



STRIKING A BALANCE

What does it mean to approach health and fitness with balance then?

Well, if we take Patterson's analogy for life, we can do the same with health and fitness. The balls that you will be juggling are largely dependent on what goal you are chasing, although some will always remain the same. Nutrition, exercise, rest and recreation are some of the balls you want to keep in the air.

Here, the most important ball, as we have repeated so often, is nutrition. But, this does not mean that you should focus everything on nutrition and forget the rest. Yes, a lifetime of poor eating habits can lead to an array of life-threatening diseases, but there will come a time when lack of exercise and movement will lead to biomechanical dysfunction and other issues related to poor fitness and muscle atrophy. However, on the one hand, focusing on nutrition and exercise is not enough – a lack of rest can also be absolutely harmful and detrimental to your health and fitness. On the other hand, an obsession with rest – well, we know what that is called!



TOO MUCH OF A GOOD THING

It's not inconceivable for a person to change her eating habits and enjoy the benefits of weight loss and a new physique. However, far too often this becomes obsessive – where the weight loss itself becomes the drug and not the pursuit of a healthy body.

This person then starts becoming extremist in her eating – perhaps cutting all fats, cutting portions and calories to ridiculous proportions, maybe even skipping meals. It is easy to see what is happening – and too often specialists talk about seeing people who, on the outside, appear to be in good shape but inside their bodies are on the verge of shutting down: damaged metabolisms and internal organs taking strain from extreme eating practices that often started out as simple diets with the best of intentions.

The same can be said about exercise. We all know that we need to be active and move to be healthier and fitter. However, a bit like the diet and the obsession with actual fat loss rates, and not the end goal, people can become obsessed with exercise: whether this is running or weights or CrossFit. The end result? People quite literally train themselves into the ground – immune systems are wrecked, dysfunction becomes chronic and injuries become debilitating. But it doesn't stop there – these people are so obsessed they will train through injuries as if the longevity of their bodies does not matter.

And that's why the old adage that too much of a good thing can become a bad thing is so true. This article is not about painting horror stories and laying up the old boogeyman, it's about reminding us all why we picked up this magazine in the first place: the healthy intention of losing fat and becoming healthier, fitter and stronger, which are all very good intentions to start with. The key is remembering the bigger picture – keeping your eye on the balls, so to speak, so that balance remains the end goal. And in this regard: balance equals wellness across all aspects of our lifestyles.

IF OUR OBSESSION WITH HEALTH CAUSES US TO DROP OUR FAMILY, FRIENDS AND INTEGRITY, WELL THEN THE WARNING IS CLEAR.



BY DEVLIN BROWN

One of the most beneficial things you can do in your quest to get into that cocktail dress for the school reunion or the bikini you promised yourself is to see "fat loss" as a team effort.

Team FATLOSS

You may ask yourself, if I'm the one losing the weight, the one exercising at 05h00 and the one carrying tupperware dishes to weddings, how can it be a team sport? Quite simple: to be successful in any body transformation you need a network of people around you to keep you safe, healthy, on track, motivated, inspired and accountable.

It's not necessary to have the entire network, or team, outlined below. In the modern world cost is an issue for most people. However, if you do some research you may be able to find a biokineticist who writes training programmes and has a diploma in nutrition on top of her extensive qualifications, or a personal trainer who has an additional qualification in nutrition, and so on. This will help to minimise the time and financial implications of seeing a variety of specialists.

What follows is the ideal fat loss "dream team", if there were no constraints:

YOURSELF

You are the captain of this team. It is you who will decide when the game starts and when it ends. You are the one who will be held accountable for the decisions you make. You are the most important person in this team, but remember: in order for a team to be able to function optimally it needs a captain who knows how to get the best out of each and every player, and knowing who to call on in different situations.

GP

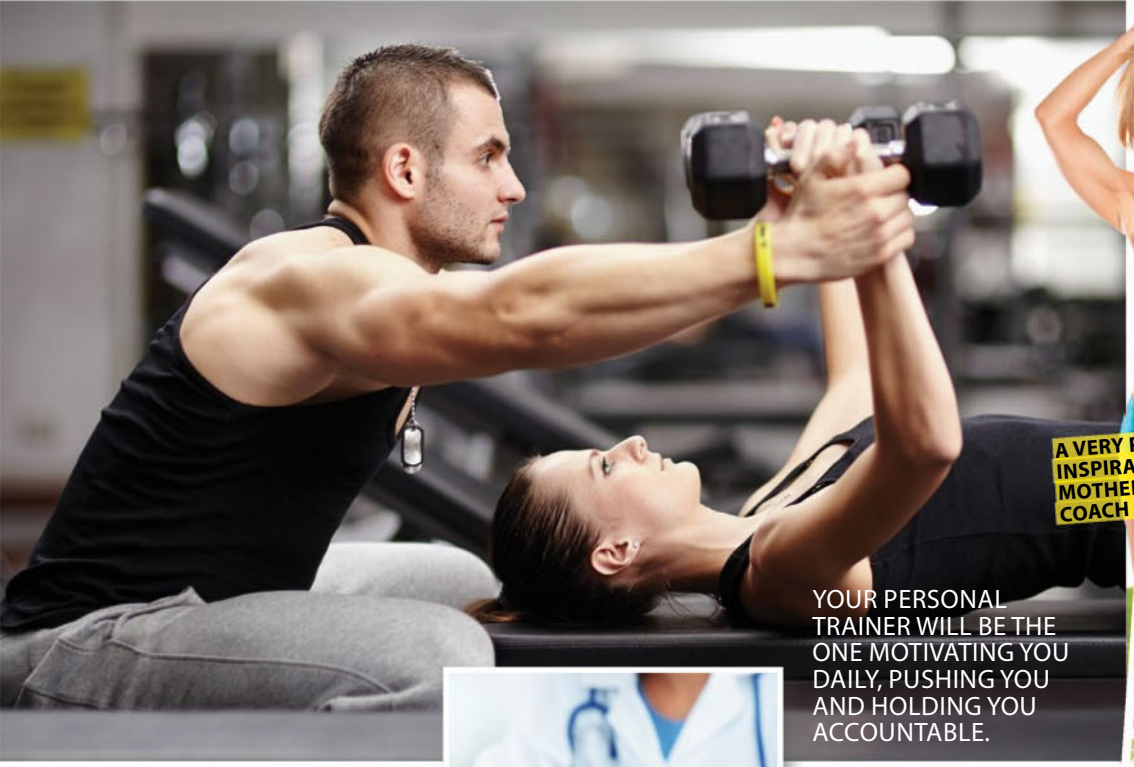
Your family doctor is your first stop. He or she will know your medical history and put you through the required battery of tests to ascertain whether you are, in fact, healthy enough to embark on an exercise regimen. Further to that, she will have recommendations for you and the other team members on how your exercise and diet should be structured. For instance – a personal trainer will want to know if you are on beta blockers, as this will have a direct bearing on how hard they push you on the treadmill to get your heart rate up. That's why your GP should always be your first stop.



BIOKINETICIST

Your bio will do a full assessment with you, which is absolutely vital to identify any underlying weaknesses, movement dysfunction, asymmetry, strength imbalances or undiagnosed injuries. Try find a practitioner who can do fitness and VO2 max tests, as well as lung function and blood indicators (glucose and cholesterol – if your GP hasn't already). If something is flagged here, she may well refer you back to the GP, who will put you in touch with the relevant specialists.

Presuming there is no chronic reason not to train, the bio can prescribe a prehabilitation programme to prepare your body for the rigours of regular exercise, especially if you've been sedentary for a long period of time. The bio will also be able to compile and take you through a rehab programme if any major dysfunction or underlying injury was picked up. They can also compile a report for your trainer, detailing any acute



YOUR PERSONAL TRAINER WILL BE THE ONE MOTIVATING YOU DAILY, PUSHING YOU AND HOLDING YOU ACCOUNTABLE.



dysfunction or asymmetry that needs to be addressed during your conventional training programme. This will also go a long way to preventing unnecessary injury.

PERSONAL TRAINER

This is the person you will spend the most time with. She may be a strength and conditioning specialist, or a personal trainer who has specialised in various areas within the generalised field of fitness. She will sit down with you and discuss your fitness and physique goals, and then discuss realistic expectations with you. She will design your exercise programme and teach you how to perform all the exercises properly. Often the personal trainer will have the relevant qualifications and/or experience in nutrition, and will draw up a diet too. But, for the purposes of this article, we will presume that she liaises with a nutritionist for that. Your personal trainer will be the one motivating you daily, pushing you and holding you accountable. She will do weekly body fat and weight assessments to track your progress and modify the plan accordingly.

DIETITIAN, NUTRITIONIST

A dietitian is an expert in the field of dietetics. A nutritionist advises on matters related to nutrition. If



you are a diabetic or have other special needs such as chronic allergies then a dietitian will be able to draw up an eating plan that is tailor-made for you and is safe and healthy. A nutritionist is also able to tailor eating plans to avoid allergies such as gluten intolerance. Perhaps you have not been able to lose weight despite your best efforts – a nutritionist may just be the person to write the eating plan you need. Both of these people will need to be aware of the personal trainer and what your exercise requirements are going to be for the duration of their diet plan.

INSPIRATION

We all need to have that person that inspires us: whether it's an athlete or a physique competitor or actress, or maybe it's a friend or family member. If we have someone who inspires us then motivation becomes that much easier. For example, a very popular choice for many women is mother and fitness model and coach Jamie Eason.

PHYSIO, CHIRO

Unfortunately, even the best-laid plans cannot always prevent injury or strain. This is where a physiotherapist or chiropractor will come into the picture. A new entrant for physical treatment is a Bowen practitioner. The point here is that your personal trainer will have picked up that you have an injury or dysfunction (assuming it was not a sudden, acute injury) and then refer you to another expert. It is important that the bio is kept abreast of which specialist you are seeing, and which type of treatment you are receiving. When the bio next does an assessment she will have a more holistic idea of what is happening with your body.



Anna Wood & Marcelle Collison

FRIENDS, FAMILY

Having a support structure around you in your daily life is very important. Tell your family and friends what you are doing so that they are understanding and hopefully supportive when you do not want to eat their milk tart or join them for drinks on a Thursday night. Having support will help you not feel alone in your pursuit of your goals. Sometimes a spouse will eat the same (for some of the time at least), which is also a massive help.

GAME PLAN

So there we have it: Team Fat Loss. The next step is getting going and, one by one, every single team member will help you come up with your game plan. But then it's up to you. The best part about pursuing a healthy lifestyle is that it is not whether you win or lose that matters, it truly is about how you play the game because, at the end of the day, the spinoffs and results will be well worth it.



BY ABBY CLARK, NPC Bikini Champion and founder of thebikinicompetitor.com

3 REASONS TO STRENGTH TRAIN

Why all women should hit the weights room

Fitness programmes that are specifically engineered for a woman's body are a relatively new phenomenon. It wasn't too long ago that you'd only find men in the weights room, while women stayed home to get their 'sweat on' with their favourite early morning aerobics programme. However, over the course of just a few decades there has been so much progression in women's fitness. Thanks to the many recent scientific studies, plus a good ol' fashion dose of trial and error, we now have a better understanding of the female body and how it responds best to exercise.

It's now an indisputable fact that targeted strength training, which is much different than body building, is profoundly beneficial for all women, no matter your goals. In fact, industry-leading physical therapists and orthopaedic doctors now advise their female patients to incorporate some form of strength training into their fitness programme.

Here are my top three reasons why women need to spend plenty of time in the weights room training for strength:

#1 – Feminine Shape

If you want to rock a pair of designer jeans or wear a cocktail dress that shows off your greatest assets then you need to build a healthy relationship with weights. Strength training builds muscle (via a process called hypertrophy) and muscle creates curves on your body. The common approach of doing endless cardio and under-eating may produce a leaner you, but it's the muscle you build from strength training that will add feminine curves such as "3D" glutes and shapely legs. Plus, strength training can give you that extra boost to knock off those few extra pounds of stubborn body fat that cardio alone cannot do.

#2 – Rev Your Engine

Strength training packs a one-two knockout punch for stubborn fat. Lifting weights increases your daily energy expenditure (often more so than moderate intensity cardio) which, as we all know, is the key to shedding unwanted body fat. Strength training actually damages your muscles to such a degree that your body uses energy around the clock to adapt by healing this damaged muscle tissue, repairing connective tissue, and replenishing intra-muscular energy stores. This phenomenon is often referred to as the "after burn" effect, which allows you to continue burning calories hours after your workout has ended. Strength training also leads to small increases in full-body muscle mass. Since muscle is metabolically active tissue, your basal (base) metabolism is permanently boosted.

#3 – Strong Bones

Osteoporosis is a disease in which bone mineral density and bone mass become reduced to critically low levels. Millions of older women suffer from osteoporosis and the results of this bone-thinning disease can be devastating. One of the most important ways to combat osteoporosis is through strength training.

How does strength training improve your bone health? When you lift weights, the forces actually bend your bones slightly. This subtle bending action stimulates cells inside bone tissue to either strengthen the existing structure or build more bone mass.

One of the best ways to strengthen your bones is to perform loaded (weight-bearing) multi-joint exercises such as squats, lunges, deadlifts, presses, and pulls. These exercises will strengthen the entire musculoskeletal system, including common areas where women experience bone fractures, such as the hips and spine.

When you perform a single-joint exercise such as a bicep curl you only use your elbow joint for the range of motion that will contract and lengthen the bicep muscle. Single-joint exercises will therefore only help strengthen the bones that support that single isolated area of the body.



About the author

Abby Clark, Rebar Fitness co-founder, trainer, and blogger, leads a lifestyle of fitness. From humble personal training beginnings, Abby launched herself into a passionate quest to uncover the truths behind performance and body composition improvement for women. In 2011 she achieved her ultimate goal, NPC Bikini Champion, which developed her understanding of the true power of science-based training and nutrition programming. Abby strives to help others attain that elusive balance of fitness, nutrition, health, and happiness. She specialises in empowering women to discover their own confidence, health, and self-esteem through targeted strength training and mindful eating. She is also the author of the Bikini Beauty System. Find out more on www.TheBikiniCompetitor.com. or on abbyclarkfitpro on Facebook.

Strength = A Better, Sexier You

Strength training involves moving any kind of weight. To reap the benefits described in this article you need to challenge yourself with a load that can only be performed for 12 repetitions or less; a lighter load won't get the job done. However, the tools are endless and you can pick and choose based on your personal interests and goal. Kettlebells, barbells, calisthenics (body weight), dumbbells, resistance bands, sleds, prowlers and sandbags are just a few examples of weights that you can move to strengthen your body and build muscle, which promotes the development of a lean and shapely physique.

To prevent osteoporosis, increase your metabolism, and sculpt a feminine and strong body I recommend starting with two strength sessions per week that consist of compound movements performed in a progressively heavier fashion over time. You will soon notice that your appetite has increased, your energy levels are higher, and those designer jeans will fill out in all the right places. With a stronger body you'll become empowered to be the woman that you've always wanted to be.

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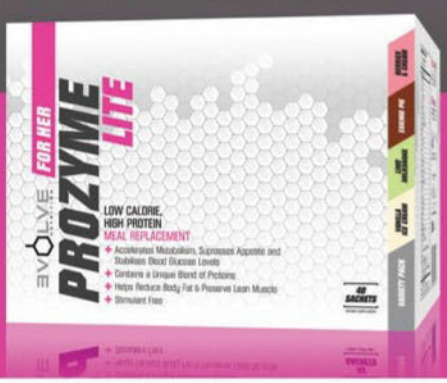




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